IDYLLS FROM THE SANSKRIT

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Idylls from the Sanskrit.

BY

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Idylls from the Sanskrit.

The Invocation.

GREAT authors of the world, almighty Pair,
Listen, O listen to your servant's prayer.
Ye, who are knit, by Love's eternal tie,
Close as the links that word and sense ally,
Hear, mighty SIVA, gracious UMA, hear;
Inspire my words, and let their sense be clear.
But, ah, the folly! Can I hope to guide
My frail bark safely o'er a boundless tide?

THE INVOCATION.

How men will mock the humble bard who sings
The ancient glories of the Sun-born Kings;
Like a young child with little hands outspread
For fruit that glows above a giant's head.
Yet by their lays the ancient Sons of Song
Ope wide the gates that guard the glorious throng;
As diamonds pierce the way for silk to string
Rich pearls to deck the forehead of a king.
Yes, I must dare: their noble deeds inspire,
And warm my bosom with a poet's fire.
Yes, I will sing, although the hope be vain
To tell their glories in a worthy strain,
Whose holy fame in earliest life was won,
Who toiled unresting till the task was done.
Far as the distant seas all owned their sway;
High as the heaven none checked their lofty way.
Constant in worship, prompt at Duty's call,
Swift to reward the good, the bad appal,
They gathered wealth, but gathered to bestow,
And ruled their words that all their truth might know.
In glory's quest they risked their noble lives;
For love and children, married gentle wives.

THE INVOCATION.

On holy lore in childhood's days intent,
In love and joy their youthful prime they spent,
As hermits, mused, in life's declining day,
Then in Devotion dreamed their souls away.
Come, hear my song, ye just, whose bosoms glow
With Virtue's flame, and good from evil know.
As fire assays the purity of gold,
Judge ye the merit of these Chiefs of old.

Aja.

"WAKE, AJA, wake! the night is fled:
Come, rouse thee while the morn is red.
Remember, the decrees of fate
Divide the world's tremendous weight:
One half thy father wakes to bear;
Then rouse thee, and support thy share.
The Moon, now fading fast away,
Has lost the splendour of his ray,—
That silver light that made him shine
With loveliness so like to thine,
That, in the night but newly past,
When chains of slumber held thee fast,
His charms won Beauty's self to be
Forgetful of her love of thee.

Awake, and let thy friends compare
Two lovely sights, exceeding fair:
That dark eye, where the pupil bright
Is dancing in its depth of light,
And the fresh lotus, where the wing
Of the wild bee is quivering.
The morning breeze is up, and now
Is stealing blossoms from the bough,
And rifling every lily, where
He finds one opening to the air.
But all in vain: the breeze may steal
The rarest sweets that flowers conceal:
All herbs that grow can ne'er combine
To make his breath as sweet as thine.
No purer pearls could ever gem
A royal lady's diadem,
Than those bright drops of beaded dew
That shine in buds of crimson hue:
But yet their gleams can ne'er eclipse
The smiles that play upon thy lips,
Whene'er, those coral lines between,
Thy brighter pearls of teeth are seen.

Before the Sun sends forth his might,
The herald Dawn dispels the night:
So, when, the bravest of thy race,
Thou fightest in the foremost place,
Thy father need not grasp the brand,
With foemen's blood to stain his hand.
Thine elephants are gone to take
Their wonted pastime in the lake;
And, as the flush of morn is shed
Upon each monster's mighty head,
Bright gleam their tusks like ribs of gold
That riven sides of mountains hold.
Roused from his sleep, full many a steed
Of perfect form and noble breed,
In thy vast stalls, O lotus-eyed,
Where rest thy coursers side by side,
Has bent his stately neck to taste
The golden grain before him placed.
Thy wreath of flowers has died away,
The torches' light is lost in day,
And now thy parrot sweetly tries
To sing our song that bids thee rise."

Quick from his couch the son of RAGHU sprang,
Wooed from his slumber as the minstrels sang;
Thus the celestial elephant, at rest
In his fair island home on Ganga's breast,
Springs up, when wild swans, thronging round, rejoice
With all the sweet full music of their voice.
He sought the plain where youthful lords, arrayed,
Waited the coming of the royal maid
To choose the flower 'mid chiefs of many a land,
And make him happy with her heart and hand.
There, upon glorious thrones of royal state,
In shining robes the rival princes sate,
In all the splendour of their proud array,
Peers of the Gods, and beautiful as they.
But AJA came, like Love divinely fair,
And struck those eager hearts with wild despair.
A shadow fell on every youthful brow,
And dimmed the eyes that beamed with hope but now.
As some young lion o'er his rocky road
Climbs to the mountain top, so AJA strode
Majestic to his throne, a wondrous seat
Bright with rich gems, and gold beneath his feet.

Such was the glory of the royal throng,
No eye could gaze upon the beauty long—
Beauty divided, like the lightning's flame,
Flashing through many a cloud, yet still the same.
All there were bright and beautiful; but one
Was fairer than the fairest—RAGHU's son.
Though all the trees of Heaven are heavenly fair,
There 's one most bright, there 's one most glorious there.
Now clear-voiced heralds in the midst proclaim
Each Prince's title and ancestral fame:
These from the Sun derive their ancient race;
Those from the Moon their rival lineage trace.
From burning aloes rose a fragrant cloud
High o'er the banners, as they waved; and loud
Sounded the music of the drum and shell,
Till, at the voice that mocked the thunder's swell,
The peacocks, glittering on the garden wall,
Danced in wild glee, obedient to the call.

High on her car, apparelled as a bride,
The maiden came, while wondering thousands eyed
Her peerless beauty, and each spirit flew
Forward to meet her, as she came in view.

As each fair tree, in lovely spring, is drest
In buds and blossoms different from the rest,
Among those Princes various gestures told
The one sweet spirit that each breast controlled.
One with quick fingers twirled a lotus round,
Dropping the fragrant pollen on the ground;
And, as the bees came near, the baffled thieves
Were driven backward by the whirling leaves.
One turned his head aside with careless grace,
His wreath, his fallen garland, to replace.
Another chieftain on his elbow leant,
And snapped his flowery garland, as he bent
In eager talk. Near him an amorous boy,
With fingers wont with laughing girls to toy,
Tore the white jasmine bud that graced his ear,
To gain her notice, as the maid came near.
Another's finger, bright with many a gem,
Feigned to replace his firm-set diadem.

SUNANDA, keeper of her palace door,
Led the fair maiden on, and stood before
A royal suitor, and his praise began
In fluent language that had graced a man:

"See, the brave Lord of MAGADH'S wide domain,
Whose aid the wretched seek, and ne'er in vain.
Safe in his rule his subjects find repose,
And hail him victor of unnumbered foes.
A thousand Princes royal rank may claim;
His, and his only, is the Sovereign's name.
Stars, constellations, planets, gem the night;
But 't is the Moon that sheds the grateful light.
Come, if this noble monarch be thy choice,
Enter in state his city, and rejoice
The dames of PUSHPAPURA, who will eye
Thy form with rapture, as thy car moves by."
She spake. The maid her flowery wreath replaced,
Fallen, as she stooped to listen, to her waist;
And, as a ripple, by the breezes stirred,
Wafts over MÁNAS lake the silvery bird
To some fresh lotus, guided by the dame,
Before the second chief the lady came.
"Look, my sweet Princess, look on ANGA'S Lord,
A lovely youth by Heavenly Maids adored;
A mighty chief, whose elephants were tamed
By skilful hunters for their science famed.

More glorious he than Kings of mortal birth,
He reigns like INDRA'S self, a God on earth.
In battle with his foes, the conqueror threw
On their wives' breasts a necklace strange and new,
When the big tear-drops on their bosoms hung,
A row of pearls most lovely, but unstrung.
BEAUTY and WISDOM, each a Goddess fair,
Dwell with him ever. Come, my Princess, share
With them the glory of his love, and be
The sweetest, fairest Goddess of the three."

Ah! woman's fancy man nor God can tell.
She knew his worth, and he deserved her well;
But yet she turned, impatient of delay,
And bade her handmaid guide her onward way.
On through the crowd again SUNANDA pressed,
And praised a chieftain towering o'er the rest,
Bright as the Moon that lights the cloudless sky,
But full of terror for a foeman's eye:
"Look on AVANTI'S Lord: his arms are long,
He 's tall, broad-chested, graceful, young and strong;
The dust of war beneath his car that springs
Dims the crest-jewels of all neighbouring Kings.

So near his home to MAHÁKÁLA's shrine,
Where SIVA's crest pours down its light divine,
That, though to us the Moon be dark or dim,
There 's ever moonlight for his loves and him.
Were it not pleasant, fairest maid, to rove
With thy young hero through the tangled grove,
Where lucid SIPRA murmurs softly by,
And lends new freshness to the breeze's sigh?"

She turned impatient from the Prince away,
As turns the lily from the God of Day.
The dame then led her to ANÚPA's King,
And thus again addressed the loveliest thing
That God had e'er created,—fair of hue
As a young lotus scarce disclosed to view:
"There lived of old a pious monarch: fame
Still loves to honour KÁRTAVIRYA's name.
A thousand arms increased the hero's might,
And made him matchless when he rode to fight.
Through all the world the mighty King was feared;
And every region saw his altars reared.
So stern his rule, his very look repressed
All thoughts of crime within the trembling breast.

The King of LANKA knew his prison well,—
There, till the victor softened, forced to dwell;
Yet was that monster mighty at the bow,
And conquered INDRA, though a heavenly foe.
Now see PRATÍPA, of this noble race,
Rich in all loveliness of mind and face.
They say that BEAUTY is a wanton Queen,
In forms defiled with vice not seldom seen;
But, in PRATÍPA, Beauty's self has shown
She knows full well in whom to fix her throne.
Armed with fierce flames, he scorned the wild attacks
Of vengeful RÁMA with his murderous axe,
And deemed as tender as a lotus leaf
The steel that slaughtered every Warrior Chief.
If thou would call his lovely home thine own,
Girt by the city as a silver zone,
And from the palace windows see the gleam
On the bright waves of REVA's rippling stream:
If such a life of love and bliss have charms,
Come and be LAKSHMI in thy hero's arms."

The lover's graceful form, the Chieftain's might,
Could find no favour in the maiden's sight.

What cares the Lotus though the full Moon shed
Sweet light in Autumn when the clouds have fled?
Then passed they on to SURASENA's King,
Whose praise the Heavenly Minstrels loved to sing;
"Of NÍPA's ancient lineage," cried the dame,
"This pious Prince has long been dear to fame.
Opposing virtues, ceasing to contest,
Blend in sweet union in his gentle breast;
As timid deer with harmless tigers dwell
In the calm precincts of the Hermit's cell.
His wondrous beauty, in its soft repose,
A moonlike glory through his palace throws;
But, in his wrath, that dazzling splendour falls
With matchless fury on his foemen's walls.
Come, choose him for thy husband, and enjoy
Youth's dearest pleasures with the blooming boy.
Haste to VRINDÁVAN with thy lord away,
Fair as the groves that boast KUVERA's sway;
And there, on couches of the softest flowers,
Spend with thy lover thy delicious hours.
There, in the Rain-time, on some hillock's crest,
Cooled by the sweet fresh breezes, shalt thou rest,

And in GOVARDHAN's pleasant caverns see
The joyous peafowl dancing in their glee."
She passed him by, another's destined bride;
As some fair river rushes by the side
Of a tall hill that would her course restrain,
And hastens onward, amorous of the main.
"Turn, royal lady, turn, and pass not by
MAHENDRA'S monarch with a careless eye.
So near the sea his palace, that between
His window-bars the mounting waves are seen.
He needs no drum, to wake him, but the roar
Of angry Ocean dashing on the shore.
Go where the palm-trees whisper. By his side
Walk on the margin of the sounding tide.
Winds shall bring flowers from many a spicy isle,
And cool thy forehead, happy Queen, the while."
Dead fell his praises on the Maiden's ear,
The beauty absent that she held more dear.
She turned away; as FORTUNE scorns to dwell
Where VIRTUE calls her, if the fates repel.
"Now," cried the matron, "to my words attend,
And on this Prince a look of favour bend.

See, round his shoulders flowery garlands cling,
And dyes of sandal mark the PÁNDUS' King.
Like the proud monarch of the Hills, he towers,
Adorned with torrents fed with new-poured showers;
Glorious in beauty, as the Sunbeams throw
O'er peaks and rocky sides a golden glow.
Wed, Princess, wed this chief of noble birth:
His love will make thee like the fruitful earth.
That love the South alone shall share with thee,
Decked with her girdle of the pearly sea.
On MALAYA'S hill, at evening, shalt thou lie,
And gales shall cool thee as they wander by.
There shalt thou see the taper betel spread
Its fresh green leaves to shade thy gentle head;
Where creeping elas clasp the sandal round,
And soft tamála leaves bestrew the ground.
Thy dainty form is fair and bright to view;
His limbs are dark as is the lotus' hue:
Each shall be lovelier by the other's side,
Like the cloud-husband and his lightning-bride."
In vain she spake. The matron's words could find
No hope of entrance to the maiden's mind;

The lotus, opening to the God of Day,
Closes her beauty from the Moon's soft ray.
Glad was each Chieftain when the maid came nigh,
But sad and gloomy when she passed him by.
Thus have I seen the passing torches gleam
On stately palaces, with transient beam;
Thus have I seen pass by the cheerful light,
And leave those domes to shades of deeper night.
At last the Princess stands by AJA's side,
While hope and fear his fluttering breast divide.
She moves no more: that faultless Prince she sees,
And only he the maiden's eye may please.
No blooms, no sweets, can tempt the bees away,
When once they rest upon the mango spray.
Again the dame addressed the bright-eyed maid,
Whose looks of love her vanquished soul betrayed:
"Born, long ago, of old IKSHWAKU's race,
KAKUTSTHA's virtues ranked him first in place.
Sprung from this sire, rich KOSAL's monarchs claim—
Their proudest boast—to bear his honoured name.
From this high line the good DILÍPA sprung,
O'er all his race a glorious lustre flung.

The wanton Wind his boundless sway confessed;
And, if a gentle maiden sank to rest
Within the garden's shade, he durst not play
With her robes rudely, as asleep she lay.
Now RAGHU decks the throne, his worthy heir,
And rules the kingdom with a father's care.
But in that rite, that best of rites, ordained
For boundless empire o'er the nations gained,
Gone is his wealth from every region sought,
Gone all the treasures that his conquests brought.
Known is his glory on the mountain's crest,
Famous his story far 'neath Ocean's breast:
The realms below, where mighty Serpents dwell,
And Heaven above us, know his praises well.
Fair as JAYANTA, scarcely less divine,
AJA was born to grace that royal line.
Now, like a steer that learns the yoke to bear,
He aids his father in the kingdom's care.
Come, choose a partner meet for thee in race,
In youth, in beauty, and in modest grace,
Famed for all virtues, best of manly mould;
So shall the gem be married to the gold."

The matron ceased: the royal maid repressed
The modest fear that filled her trembling breast.
Shame kept her silent; but each quivering limb
Proclaimed the fair-haired maiden's love for him:
Then, with a radiant look of love and joy,
As with a wreath of flowers, she chose the boy.
"On, Princess, on!" the smiling matron cried.
She spoke no word, but angry looked aside.
On AJA's neck the flowery wreath was thrown,
And showed the love her tongue refused to own.
So sweet those flowers upon his shoulders hung,
He thought the Princess in her love had flung
Her twining arms around him. Loud and long
Rang out the rapture of the gathered throng.
All, save the rival Chiefs, assembled there
Thus hailed the meeting of that peerless pair:
"Now see, the lily, loveliest flower of night,
Weds her moon-lover in his cloudless light.
See! GANGA, fairest stream, at length has rest,
And sinks delighted on her Ocean's breast."

On, to the city, where the joyous throng
Make the streets merry with the dance and song

On, through those splendid gates, where colours glow
Mocking the glories of the Heavenly Bow;
On speeds the pomp, along the royal street,
Banners o'erhead, and flowers beneath their feet.
Careless of all beside, each lady's eye
Must gaze on AJA, as the troop sweeps by.
One dark-eyed beauty would not stay to bind
Her long black tresses, flowing unconfined
Save by her little hand; her flowery crown
Hanging, neglected and unfastened, down.
One from her maiden tore her foot away,
On which the dye all wet and streaming lay,
And o'er the chamber, rushing in her haste,
Where'er she stepped, a crimson footprint traced.
Another at the window takes her stand,
With one eye dyed, the pencil in her hand.
Here runs an eager dame, and, running, holds
Loose and ungirt her flowing mantle's folds,
While, as she strives to close the parting vest,
Its brightness lends new beauty to her breast.
Another, in her eager speed, has thrown
Down from her waist her golden-buckled zone,

Farther and farther slipping, as she springs,
Till round her little foot at length it clings.
From latticed palaces there beams a light
Of eager faces excellently bright,
Like sweetest lilies: for those dark eyes fling
Quick glances, quivering like the wild bee's wing.
The train swept by: on AJA's form alone
The joyful looks of every dame were thrown.
On his bright face they fed the rapturous gaze,
And only turned to marvel and to praise:
"Surely in vain, had not the Lord of Life
Matched this fair bridegroom and this lovely wife,
Had been his wish to show the world a mould
Of perfect beauty. These, in days of old,
Were the young Love-God and his faithful bride;
For she, remembering the links that tied
Their former lives together, fondly clings
To him alone amid a thousand kings."

Such words of praise, from many a bright-eyed dame,
On AJA's ear with soothing witchery came;
While to the palace of the king the throng
In proud procession slowly swept along.

There the Priest joined the lover and the maid,
And offerings due to Fire, the Witness, paid.
Brighter and brighter grew that lover's look,
As in his own the maiden's hand he took.
From hand to hand the soft infection stole,
Till each confessed it in the inmost soul.
Fire filled his veins: with joy she trembled; such
The magic influence of that thrilling touch.
They met, and for a moment love's sweet shame
O'er the blest bridegroom and his darling came:
Eye looked to eye; but, quivering, as they met,
They dared not trust the rapturous gazing yet.
A pair most lovely! 'T was a goodly sight,
As round the fire they walked in solemn rite;
Like Day and starry Midnight, when they meet
In the broad plains at holy MERU's feet.
Then, at the Priest's command, the lady threw
On the pure flame the grain in order due:
The scented smoke upon her shoulders hung,
And round her ears in flowerlike beauty clung.
As o'er the incense the sweet lady stooped,
The ear of barley from her tresses drooped,

And ringed her ear with gold: the while her eye
Seemed newly darkened with the jetty dye.
Then from the altar, as prescribed of old,
They turned, and rested upon seats of gold,
Where the glad King and all the matron train
Sprinkled them duly with the moistened grain.
He bade his courtiers pay all honour due
To the young Chieftains that had come to woo.
They sought, with words of joy and love, to hide
Their burning rage and disappointed pride,
Gave gifts the monarch's honours to repay,
Then bade their host farewell, and went their way.

But they had leagued them in a treacherous plot,
To wait for AJA in a distant spot;
Watching the moment when their troops might dare
The tender lady from her lord to tear.
Long time the Princes hate to RAGHU bore,
For humbled pride and ravished wealth of yore;
And now their rage burnt fiercer, when his son
That peerless maiden for his bride had won.
Now as he bears his lovely prize away,
The rival Princes seek his steps to stay.

At AJA's order, near the lady stand
A trusted Chieftain and a chosen band:
He with his host is ready to oppose
The furious onset of that flood of foes;
As SONE, with all his billows rising high,
Meets mighty GANGA, daughter of the sky.
Well matched, I ween, each pair that fought that day:
Horseman met horseman in the equal fray;
Footman on footman dashed with level spear;
And car was whirled at car in mad career;
While, rushing wildly, with a shriek and roar,
Opposing elephants their riders bore.
'T was vain to call each bowman's lineage out
'Mid braying trumpets and the battle's shout;
But every arrow bore inscribed a name,
To tell the wounded chief his foeman's fame.
Earth to her deep foundation quakes and reels
With thundering elephants and rushing wheels.
See, see, the dust-cloud, from the horses' feet,
Thicker and thicker as the armies meet,
Rises aloft, and, spreading far and wide,
Forms a dark veil, the very sun to hide.

Like fishes drinking in a muddy stream,
Those emblem fishes on the banner seem
Their mouths to open as the breezes blow,
And drink the dust that covers all below.
Veiled by that cloud, the rattling wheels alone
Proclaim the car: the elephant is known
By his bells' tinkling; and the men proclaim,
To show them friends or foes, their leader's name.
Like the red sun, just rising out of night,
So, in those clouds of dust that hid the light,
Glowed the full stream, the crimson tide that ran
From wounded elephant, and horse, and man.
Thick clouds still hovered o'er that ruddy tide,
And swayed, with changing winds, from side to side;
As light smoke, floating when the coals below
Have lost their flame, but still retain their glow.
There drooped a chieftain, smitten from afar,
As he sped onward in his flying car;
One moment drooped, then, shaking off the pain,
Rose up, and bade the driver turn again,
And rushed for vengeance on his foe, betrayed
By his bright flag that in the breezes played.

From well-drawn bows an arrowy shower flew:
What though the foemen cleft those shafts in two,
One half flew onward,—with such force they sped,—
And stained with hostile blood each iron head.
The sharp steel rings, by practised fingers cast,
Through many a driver's neck have keenly past;
But the heads fall not yet; for vultures tear,
With eager talons, at the dead men's hair.
That noble horseman, when his wounded foe
Sinks down, exhausted 'neath his sturdy blow,
Smites not again upon his drooping crest,
But gives him time, and bids him breathe and rest.
Now, lavish of their lives, mailed warriors clash
Their swords on tusks of elephants: the flash
Startles the monsters, and, in wild affright,
They spout a flood upon the sudden light.
Upon that field of battling thousands, all
Proclaims that Death holds there his festival:
There glows the fruit, full many a severed head;
With fallen helms, for cups, the board is spread;
Nor is the red wine wanting, in the flood,
The ceaseless river of the warriors' blood.

A prowling wolf that severed arm has spied,
And, swift with hunger, to the feast has hied.
A golden bracelet round the arm is hung;
Against the clasp he wounds his foaming tongue,
Turns, with an angry howl of pain, away,
And to those vultures leaves the mangled prey.
Here meet two warriors, both their drivers slain,
Forced both to battle and their steeds to rein:
Shafts from each army lay their horses low;
They seize their maces, and give blow for blow:
The shattered maces fail them; but they clasp
Each other's body with a foeman's grasp.

Armed all in mail, with quiver and with bow,
Now AJA dashed upon the startled foe.
'T was a fair sight, that noble youth to view,
As from his belt his hand the arrows drew:
Once to his ear the string seemed drawn, and still
Seemed to breed arrows at the archer's will.
Once more their shattered bands the Chiefs unite;
Once more they charge him with redoubled might.
Where, where is AJA? Scarcely can the eye
See, through the whelming darts, his banner fly;

As in the morning, through thick flakes of snow,
Ye scarce can mark the young Sun's rising glow.
Fair as the God of Love, when lovely Spring
Has given his sweetest flowers to grace his King,
The royal AJA, eager for the fight,
Drew his new bow, to try its wondrous might;
That magic bow, that was, of old, the boast,
The pride, and wonder, of Heaven's minstrel host.
Suddenly, lo! as if by sleep opprest,
On their drawn strings the archers' fingers rest;
And warriors, drooping 'neath the banner's shade,
Lean on the staff, their failing limbs to aid.
Quick to his lips young AJA moved his shell,
To lips that knew his darling's kisses well;
Seemed it as though in one triumphant draught
Embodied glory from that shell he quaffed.
His soldiers started at the well-known sound,
And saw him with his prostrate foes around;
Like the bright moon victorious in the skies,
When the sad lotus drowned in slumber lies.
Then AJA seized a dripping shaft, and o'er
The Princes' banners traced these words in gore:

"AJA has torn your warlike fame away,
But spared your forfeit lives in fight to-day."
One hand he rests upon his mighty bow,
Then bares his brow, and gives his hair to flow,
And, with the heat-drops pouring down his cheeks,
He hastens to his love, and proudly speaks:
"Look, my own darling, on the conquered foes,
Whose puny force an infant might oppose:
Yet such a force they fondly deemed would be
Enough to tear my lovely bride from me."
The Prince's face was radiant with delight,
Flushed with the triumph of the glorious fight;
E'en as a mirror, dimmed by breath, and then
Bright as before, and fair and clear again.
Modest and silent, though her heart beat high,
She gave her maids a signal to reply.
Thus, when the Rain has made the Earth rejoice,
She thanks the kind clouds in the peacock's voice.
He spurned the Chieftains, prostrate as they lay,
And proudly led his faultless bride away;
Like Victory drest in woman's form most fair,
The dust of battle hanging on her hair.

Now aged RAGHU, weary of the weight,
Resigned to AJA all the cares of state;
And he, obedient, not like Kings who lust
For power and empire, took the sacred trust;
And Earth with him the holy sprinkling shared
Of purest water for the rite prepared.

Who can resist the favourite of the Sage
Skilled in the lore of Scripture's holy page?
Who can oppose, when Wind and Fire unite?
And who contend, when God and Valour fight?
Proud of their youthful Lord, the people viewed
Their own dear monarch in his son renewed;
And every man amid that subject host
Made of Prince AJA's love his proudest boast.
None was neglected: of the streams that run,
To bear him tribute, Ocean scorns not one.

As bending trees the steady wind obey,
So bent his nobles to his mild, firm sway.
When RAGHU sees his son beloved of all,
No earthly thought must now his soul enthrall:
For all the monarchs of DILÍPA's race,
When blest with worthy sons to fill their place,

Forsaking worldly cares in life's decline,
To them the sceptre and the throne resign,
Assume the garment of the holy Sage,
And spend in thoughts of God their tranquil age.

On AJA's temples shines the royal crown;
But at his father's feet he throws him down.
"Stay, best of friends," he cries, "dear father, stay;
Still let thy presence aid and bless my sway."
And RAGHU listens; for his loving heart
Still clings to AJA, and is loth to part.
But royal rank he claims not; as the snake
Cares not again his cast-off skin to take.
A humble cot beyond the city now
Shades him, devoted to his hermit vow;
While lovely Fortune, wedded to his heir,
For ever tends him with a daughter's care.

E'en as the sky, what time the Moon has set,
And the new Sun has scarcely risen yet,
So was that race; the sire in his retreat,
The heir just placed upon the royal seat.
As two fair Virtues from their native skies,
RAGHU and AJA charmed the people's eyes.

The father, clad in humble hermit's dress,
Seemed upon earth incarnate Holiness;
The noble youth, in kingly robes arrayed,
Seemed Royal Virtue bodily displayed.
To guard his kingdom, and to keep his own,
AJA called prudent lords around his throne;
A home for ever in the skies to win,
RAGHU loved Saints and Sages free from sin.
To guard his people with impartial care,
AJA sat daily in his judgment-chair;
While upon sacred grass his sire reclined,
And gave to holy thoughts his steadfast mind.
One neighbouring Princes 'neath his sceptre brought;
The other checked his breath in deepest thought.
While AJA spoiled the fame his foes had won,
And marred the feats their warlike hands had done,
His father purified in Wisdom's blaze
The binding deeds performed in early days.
His people's guardian, AJA cared for all
The weighty duties on a King that fall;
His father vanquished Nature's triple chain
By counting gold, no more than clay, a gain.

There was no resting in the great emprise,
Till fruit of triumph gladdened AJA's eyes;
In holy thought no respite RAGHU knew,
Till all the Godhead opened to his view.
Each gained his wish: one triumphed o'er the foe,
And laid his armies and his glories low;
One o'er his senses gained supreme control,
And checked each rising passion of the soul.

Years passed away; and still, at AJA's prayer,
The royal Hermit breathed the vital air:
Looking on all below with equal eye,
He fixed his thoughts upon the glorious sky,
And gained the boon he longed for, to unite
With the Great Spirit in the world of light.

How AJA sorrowed when his sire was dead!
What tears of anguish o'er his corse he shed!
And then performed, without the aid of fire,
The last sad duties to his Hermit Sire.
He offered gifts through filial love alone,
The gifts men offer when the soul is flown;
For well he knew how vain and useless they,
When spirits pass, as RAGHU's passed, away.

By his command the people were restrained
From mourning him who endless bliss had gained;
Then, by the terror of his ready bow,
He made the Earth his own, nor left a foe.

Earth, and the lady, each a lovely bride,
Wedded to such a lord, were filled with pride.
Earth poured her jewels from her boundless store;
A noble son the Queen, her rival, bore.
That mighty boy in after time shall be
Bright as the Sun, and known as far as he:
His glorious name shall many a bard inspire,
Himself a mighty King, and RÁMA'S sire.
Clear as the Day-God in the cloudless skies,
No darkening shade on AJA'S glory lies.
Saints, Gods, and Spirits had no claim on him,
His breast to sadden, or his fame to dim.
For he had pored on Holy Writ, and knew,
And paid with care, each sacred offering due;
And now, to clear him from the ancient claim;
And guard his line, this gentle infant came.
He used his might the poor and weak to save;
His wisdom honour to the wisest gave;

His boundless treasures succoured all distrest,
And through his virtues were his people blest.
Ne'er did he shun the city's crowded street;
'T was joy to him his subjects' looks to meet:
But 't was a sweeter joy to steal away,
With his dear partner, at the close of day,
And, while their happy child around them played,
To roam delighted through the neighbouring shade;
Happy as INDRA wandering with his love,
His bright-eyed SACHI, through the groves above.

Once with his darling as he chanced to roam,
NÁRAD, sweet singer, speeding to his home,—
For he had tuned his heavenly lyre, to cheer
With sounds of melody great SIVA's ear,
In far GOKARNA, where the God abode,—
Flew o'er their heads, upon his airy road.
The wind, enamoured of the scent of flowers
That grew and blossomed in no earthly bowers,
Swept o'er the chaplet on his lyre that lay,
And bore it swiftly through the clouds away.
Fairer and sweeter than the flowers that grow
In lovely gardens in this world below,

That falling chaplet finds a fitting rest
On the smooth wonder of the lady's breast.
But, when that garland on her bosom lies,
The Queen one instant looks, then faints, and dies;
As faints the lily, when the Demon's might
Snatches the moon, her lover, from her sight.
Scarce has she sunk, of sense and life bereft,
Ere sense and motion, too, her lord have left.
Loud shrieks, in sorrow, each attendant near;
And startled birds reply with notes of fear.
Tended with care, the King revives, at last;
And she—Ah, Fate has bound its prey too fast.
Art may recall the yet delaying breath;
No charms, alas! can win his prey from Death.
Lovely but mournful, like an unstrung lute,
She looked all soulless, beautiful and mute,
As in her husband's loving arms she lay,
Pale as the Moon that shrinks before the day.
Broken in spirit, thus the mourner cries;
His voice scarce heard for groans, and sobs, and sighs.
If iron melts before the conquering flame,
Is the soul stronger in its mortal frame?

"Dead of a flower, my dearest! And has such
The power to kill thee with its gentle touch?
Now every weapon Fate may use to slay,
If pleasant flowers can take the life away.
Ah, I remember. Such is Nature's will,
That gentle means should gentle creatures kill.
Have I not seen a sweet young lotus die
Of soft snow melting when the sun rose high?
How can this chaplet, if so deadly there,
Here, on my bosom placed, have power to spare?
But poisoned cups may life and strength bestow,
And Amrit kill, if God will have it so.
And thus the bolt has spared the husband tree,
And killed the gentle plant that clung to me.
"Speak to me, dearest. When I vexed thee, thou
Wast ever gentle. Why so scornful now?
And art thou gone without one last adieu?
And didst thou think my vows of love untrue?
Ah, human weakness! Still her lips are red
With my last kisses: and the girl is dead!
Unkind, unkind! Canst thou thy love forsake,
Who ne'er in thought would cause thy heart to ache?

In name alone the Earth my bride they call:
Thou art my Queen, my love, my life, my all.
The soft wind moves the flowers that deck thy hair,
And whispers hope amid my wild despair.
Wake, darling, wake! My midnight gloom dispel,
Like the bright plant that lights the darksome dell.
Woe, woe! Thy hair is wandering freely o'er
Those dear dear lips that speak not, move not more.
Thus the sad lotus sleeps, that all day long
Made pleasant music with the wild bee's song.
Night goes, but glads her loving moon again;
The love-bird mourns, but mourns not all in vain.
Lovers may part, and live, if hope be left;
But I for ever, ever am bereft.
"Those dainty limbs, for which soft blossoms, spread
By gentle hands, were all too rude a bed,
How will they bear to lie upon the pyre,
Ere burnt to ashes by the ruthless fire?
The sharer of thy secrets, dear, thy zone,
Rings out no longer with its silvery tone,
Now that thy foot is silent. Can it be
That all its voice and life have fled with thee?

"Signs of thy charms will meet me. Thou hast taught
Koïls thy voice of music: swans have caught
That step that love made languid: startled roes
Have learnt thy winning glance: the creeper throws
Her amorous arms, when shaken by the breeze,
As thou didst, dearest. Thou hast left me these:
But thou art gone away to Heaven, and what
Can soothe my anguish, love, when thou art not?
Didst thou not promise, long ago, to see
Thy creeper married to thy favourite tree?
And now, ere yet the rites are well begun,
Thou hast departed. Is this kindly done?
Thy dear Asoka tree, that loved thee much,
And bloomed so bravely at thy gentle touch,
What henceforth will its blossoms be? And how,
Meant for thy tresses, can I use them now?
Believe me, love, it weeps for thee, and showers—
The only tears it can—a rain of flowers;
Mourning what none can give again, the sweet
Beloved pressure of thy gentle feet.
Art thou asleep,—thy zone, in which we wound
Flowers like thy breath for sweetness, still unbound?

These girls were partners of thy grief and joy:
Here, like the Moon in beauty, stands our boy.
In thee alone was centred all my bliss:
With these to love thee, was thy purpose this?
Dear pupil in the song, friend, partner, wife,
What is not lost, oh, tell me, with thy life!
Girl with the eyes that sparkled; wont to drink
The wine of kisses from my lips; oh, think,
How wilt thou bear to taste, in realms above,
Tears mixed with water, for the kiss of love?"

Thus as he wept, the mourner's cries of woe
Forced the trees' tears in balmy streams to flow.
Scarce could his sorrowing friends, with tender care,
The lovely body from his bosom tear,
And on the pyre those dainty limbs compose,
Where scented flames from logs of sandal rose.
Pale as the sad Moon when the night is fled,
Back to the city all alone he sped,
And saw his grief reflected in the eyes
Of mourning matrons with their deep-drawn sighs.
His saintly Teacher marked the monarch's grief,
And sent a Hermit to console the Chief.

Before the mourner stood the holy man,
And thus, with gentle words, his speech began:
"Well doth the pitying Saint, my Master, know
The cause, sad King, that bids thy tears to flow;
And, did not rites unfinished claim his care,
He had been here to soothe thy wild despair.
Now hear the message of the holy Sage;
Store in thy mind the wise advice of age.
His eye of knowledge never waxes dim,
Nought in the triple world is hid from him;
But, all uncovered to his searching eye,
The past, the present, and the future lie.
Once TRINAVINDU, for his virtues known,
Through sternest Penance threatened INDRA's throne.
The God from Paradise, in wild alarm,
Sent a fair Nymph, the Sage's mind to charm.
Scarce could the Saint his furious wrath control,
Surging tempestuous o'er his troubled soul;
And, as she stood, in all her charms arrayed,
He laid the curse of death upon the maid.
'Father, forgive me!'—was her tearful cry—
'My lord commands; a helpless slave am I.'

Then cried the Sage: 'On earth a prisoner be,
Till flowers of Heaven shall fall and set thee free.'
Born, ages after, of a royal line,
She was thy consort, and her heart was thine.
But those sweet flowers upon her breast that fell
Have freed her spirit, and removed the spell.
Weep not for her; but for thy land provide:
The Earth, remember, is the Monarch's bride.
Well hast thou borne thy prosperous fortune's test,
Nor once has pride inflamed thy constant breast:
Then scorn, O King, beneath thy grief to bow;
But show the same unyielding spirit now.
Up, and be strong! Thy useless grief control,
And with rich offerings cheer thy lady's soul.
Hast thou not heard, when tears for ever flow,
The spirit suffers from the mourner's woe?"
The sage's counsel reached the mourner's ear;
But, rent by grief, his heart refused to hear.
Then to his home the Hermit turned again,
And with him turned the counsel sent in vain.
Still, moved by pity for his helpless boy,
He bore eight dreary years without a joy;

Or, if a joy he had, it was to trace
In each fair thing some well-remembered grace
Of his lost darling, and in dreams to fold
His loving arms around her, as of old.
The sword of anguish cleft his broken heart;
As the wild fig-tree, bursting through, will part
The palace pavement. Well he knew the ill
Would mock the leeches and their boasted skill.
To him 't was gain: he only longed to die,
And meet his well-beloved in the sky.

Soon as the boy the burnished mail could wear,
He learnt the arts that claim a ruler's care.
Then AJA, weary of the light of day,
Resolved to fast his noble life away.
Where SARJU'S wave with GANGÁ'S stream unite,
From the dead clay his spirit winged its flight,
Hasting to join the deathless bands above:
And there he met his own, his only love,
More lovely far than ever, and had rest
In the sweet groves and mansions of the Blest.

Sítá.

SÍTÁ.

"I SWEAR it by thy gracious love, by thy dear life I swear,
In Heaven itself I would not dwell, unless my lord were there.
For not on mother or on son, on father or on friend,
But on her own dear husband, must the faithful wife depend.
Thou art my refuge and defence, my guide, my God art thou;
I swear that I will follow thee, and nought shall change my vow.
If thou art banished to the woods, thy wife has firmly sworn
To trample down, before thy feet, the bramble and the thorn.
For royal courts and palaces to me are not so sweet,
Nor Heaven so pleasant, as the place where tread my husband's feet.
I will be happy in the wood, and have no thought of fear,
Though bears and lions prowl around, if thou, my love, art near.

SÍTÁ.

Turn me not back, nor fear for me : my RÁMA's mighty arm
Will keep his faithful SÍTÁ from the shadow of all harm.
I will not be a charge to thee : the wood will give me roots,
The spring will yield me water, and the branch provide me fruits.
In hermit's humble mantle clad, and guarded by my lord,
I long to wander through the wood, the rivulet to ford,
To climb the rock, and gaze upon the lake that looks so cool,
And, oh, the pleasant bathing in the clear and shaded pool,
With waters freshly running from the sweet perennial springs,
All lovely with the lotuses and wild swans' silver wings.
I would not live in heaven itself, and thou, my love, away :
A thousand years with thee, my love, would seem one blissful day.
Then take me with thee to the wood ; leave me not here to weep ;
Nor bid thy loving SÍTÁ break the vows she sware to keep.
Not safer is my father's house than the wood when thou art nigh :
My every thought is fixed on thee ; without thee I must die.
Then take me with thee to the wood, nor leave me here alone :
I will not be a burthen sore to thee, mine own, mine own."

RÁMA.

" Come, SÍTÁ, listen to my words : one nobly born as thou,
And nurtured well, has not to learn her wifely duty now.

SÍTÁ.

An exile to the woods I go; for 't is my father's will:
My body far from thee will fare, my heart be with thee still.
But many are the woes that wait upon a forest-life;
And woes like these thou must not share with me, my gentle wife.
In the wild wood the tiger springs on those who wander near:
How can I take thee with me, love, to such a place of fear?
Wild elephants roam madly there, and, in their fury, slay:
Is such a place a home for thee? No, here my love must stay.
The forest-life has fears and woes too many to be told:—
Thirst, hunger, burning heat by day, by night the bitter cold.
Each moment on some deadly thing the heedless step may fall,
Where serpents with their venomed fangs, and poisonous scorpions crawl.
There through the day the tiger roams, the panther, and the boar,
And, through the night, the caverned hills echo the lion's roar.
There many a river, deep and wide, will bar thine onward way,
Where fearful crocodiles amid the foaming waters play.
The forest paths, my SÍTÁ dear, are rough and hard to pass,
Tangled with knotted creeping plants, and thorns, and matted grass.
O'er many a league the wild woods stretch, and savage beasts abound;
No fruit or flower may there be seen, and water scarce is found.
No bed is there to rest the limbs, but, stretched upon a heap
Of fallen leaves and gathered grass, the homeless wretch must sleep.

For many a long and dreary day the wanderer there must fast,
Blest if perchance his toil have found wild fruits or grain at last.
A scanty dress of skin or bark must be his only wear;
Rough and untrimmed his beard must be, matted and long his hair.
There wind and heat dry up the frame, defiled with dust and mire,
Tried by the cold, the autumn rain, the summer's scorching fire.
For me, when worn to skin and bone, what love wilt thou retain?
From thee, devoted to thy vows, what pleasure shall I gain?
When stained with dust and mire I see those soft limbs, now so fair,
Believe me, love, my pain will be greater than I can bear.
No, such a life is not for thee; cast thou the thought away:
Here, in the palace of the King, in peace and safety stay.
Though far away from thee I go, and thou remainest here,
Still shalt thou live within the heart to which thou art so dear."

SÍTÁ.

"The woes that thou hast counted up, the toil, the care, the pain,
All these, my love, for love of thee, I look upon as gain.
At INDRA's might I tremble not, when guarded by thine arm:
And can the rovers of the wood do happy SÍTÁ harm?
I will not dread the lion's roar, nor turn away to fly
From tigers bounding through the brake, if thou art only nigh.

And death to me were sweeter far, with thine arms around me thrown,
Than life in thy father's palaces in safety, but alone.
Now, hear my word, my lord and love: with thee must SÍTÁ go,
Or die, by thee deserted here, in grief and bitter woe.
With thee my spirit will be glad, and aught that I endure,
While, pilgrim-like, with thee I roam, will make me yet more pure.
And very blessed shall I be in this and the coming life;
For thou, my RÁMA, ever art a God unto thy wife.
The wife's eternal duty is, as holy priests declare,
To follow where her husband goes, his weal and woe to share;
And, for the true and loving wife, remains the endless bliss
Of sharing all this life with him, and the life that follows this."
Thus spoke she in her wild despair, and wept in bitter woe,
And let her tears, in scalding drops, down her sweet bosom flow.
He gazed upon her tearful face; then down his eyes he bent,
And pondered in his heart the woes that wait on banishment.
Then, as he stood in silence there, the lady spoke again;
Her voice was full of anger, and her soft eyes of disdain.
Her lips with passion quivered, as she spoke these words of scorn,
And forth the love-born tempest burst with which her breast was torn:
"The king my father fondly dreamed, who boasted that a son
Worthy of honour and of love his daughter's hand had won.

What! is this soulless coward he of whom the people say
That he is peerless, noble, brave, and glorious as the day?
Unmanly RÁMA, tell me now, what does thy spirit fear,
That thou wilt thus forsake the wife who once was counted dear
Oh, why wilt thou desert me thus, who evermore have sought
To do no sin against my lord, in deed, or word, or thought?
If I have ever vexed thy soul, or seemed to be unkind,
Forgive me, O my husband dear, nor bear my fault in mind.
With thee beneath the greenwood shade my life will be so blest;
To walk with thee more pleasant far than on soft beds to rest.
My limbs will never weary grow, nor will my feet be torn;
For soft as silk to me will feel the bramble and the thorn.
Sweeter will be my sleep with thee, where leaves and grass are spread,
Than if soft wool and costly furs decked forth my lonely bed.
No precious perfume shall I need, no sandal rich and rare,
So sweet will seem the wafted dust that falls upon me there.
The fruit thy hand shall gather there, and offer me to eat,
Bitter or pleasant be its taste, shall be, like Amrit, sweet.
What thing that lives upon the earth will be so blest as I,
In grassy places when I rest, with thee for ever nigh?
No murmur shalt thou hear from me, nor will I ever grieve
For father, friends, for kith or kin, for home, for all I leave.

I will not be a burthen, dear, while there with thee I dwell:
Each place, with thee, is Heaven to me; without thee, all is hell.
Come, take me to the forest shade: the boon I pray for give:
Without thee, O my dearest one, thy SÍTÁ cannot live.
Oh, save me from the bitter pang of being torn away:
To thee for refuge, love, I fly, to thee, my hope and stay.
Once more consider my request, and hear me, as I swear
Poison to drink, before thine eyes, if thou refuse my prayer.
Scarce can I bear thine absence, dear, from morn to set of sun:
How shall I bear the killing grief ten years, or three, or one?"
Down at her pitying husband's feet the weeping lady fell,
Begging, with many a tear, to go with him she loved so well.
Her tender words of love and grief pierced through her husband's breast;
And from his eyes came floods of tears that would not be repressed.
He took the lady by the hand, and raised her on her feet,
And thus, in soothing accents, spoke words very kind and sweet:
"Oh, what is heaven without thee, love? With thee I'll live and die:
Never will RÁMA stoop to fear, though BRAHMÁ's self came nigh.
Obedience to my father's will now sends me to the wood;
For paramount of duties this is counted by the good.
Only to try thy mind, my love, thy prayer I first denied:
I never dreamt that aught could harm the lady by my side.

But yet I feared to suffer thee, so delicate and fair,
The troubles of a forest life, and all its woes, to share.
Now, as the glory of his life the Saint can ne'er resign,
Thou too, devoted, brave, and true, shalt follow and be mine."

Savitri.

So passing fair the young Savitri grew,
That all adored her, but none thought to woo.
No lovelier nymph e'er left her native skies,
To dazzle mortals with her heavenly eyes;
And how might e'en the proudest chieftain dare
To woo a Princess so divinely fair?
His child, unsought in pride of maiden bloom,
Cast o'er her father's soul a shade of gloom.
"My child," he cried, "I heard an ancient Sage
Read forth this text from Scripture's holy page:
'Shame on the son whose widowed mother prays
For aid from others in her lonely days.
Shame on the sire whose daughter mourns her fate,
Her hand unoffered, doomed to weep and wait.'

Now choose a bridegroom from some princely line,
Whose youth and beauty may be matched with thine.
Go forth, my child, and let thy worthy choice
Remove this shame, and make my soul rejoice."

Her head she bowed, her eyes she downward cast,
Then, as he bade her, from his presence passed.
O'er many a plain her gold-bright car she drove,
Through field and forest, through the sacred grove;
Greeting the sages whom she chanced to meet,
And pouring treasures at their holy feet.
Back to her father's halls the lady came,
Where the wise NÁRAD, Saint of mighty fame,
Sitting in converse with her sire she found,
And bowed her head, in worship, to the ground.
"Say, dearest daughter," thus the monarch cried,
"What chief has won thee for his promised bride:
His name, his country, and his race declare;
And pray the Saint to bless the princely pair."
In sweet soft accents thus the royal maid,
As 't were a God's, her sire's command obeyed:
"O'er his glad people, ere the evil day,
The lord of SALWA reigned with equal sway.

Just, good, and honoured for his virtues, Fame
Still loves to cherish DYUMATSENA'S name.
Hard was his fate, with sightless eyes to mourn
His ravished kingdom, friendless and forlorn.
Forth from his royal home, unkinged, he fled
Where his sad wife his trembling footsteps led;
Then, in a grove, amid a distant wild,
He lived for Penance, with his wife and child.
There grew to manhood SATYAVAN, their son:
He is my bridegroom, he my chosen one."
"Ah!" cried the Saint, "the maiden little knows
What grief that choice will bring, what bitter woes.
What though all graces and all gifts combined
Adorn his person and exalt his mind;
Learned and patient, truthful, firm and wise,
And brave as INDRA'S self who rules the skies;
Pious and dutiful, of lofty soul,
With every passion kept in due control;
Gentle and modest, beautiful and strong,
The friend of virtue, and the foe of wrong;
But, ah! no virtue and no charm has power
To save the hero from the fated hour.

This day returning, when a year has fled,
Shall see that hero numbered with the dead."
"Go forth, dear daughter," cried the King, "again:
This blot is fatal, and thy choice is vain."
"No," cried the princess; "once the die must fall;
And the maid's love is given once for all.
Whether his days be many, or be few,
My heart has chosen, and my love is true."
Her heart was fixed, her purpose changeless still;
And the King yielded to his daughter's will.
She married him she loved, nor mourned her lot,
To leave a palace for a hermit's cot.
Proud in her choice, no rising tear could dim
Her bright eyes, happy when she looked on him.
Her gentle limbs in hermit's garb were drest;
No jewels sparkled on the lady's breast:
So meek, so lovely, with her tender care
She gained the heart of every dweller there.
Nearer and nearer came that awful day
When ruthless fate must snatch her lord away.
It came. Unconscious of his doom he stood,
And smiled upon her ere he sought the wood.

She stayed his parting steps, and cried "Mine own,
I cannot leave thee. Go not forth alone.
And you, dear parents, let me go, I pray;
I cannot bear to leave my lord to-day.
Ne'er from this garden have my footsteps strayed;
I long to see the forest and the shade."
Her smiling lip a breaking heart belied:
She left the cottage at her husband's side.
"O see the peacocks," thus he cried, "unfold,
In glittering glory, all their green and gold;
See that pure rivulet that wanders through
Beds of sweet flowers of every brilliant hue."
But still on him her anxious eye was bent,
While love and fear in twain her bosom rent.
He gathered fruit in many a tangled dell,
And mighty boughs beneath his hatchet fell.
His brow grew heated as he toiled amain,
And through his temples shot a sudden pain.
"Dearest," he cried, "such torture racks my head,
My limbs are weary, and my heart seems dead."
She sate, and laid his head upon her breast,
And, full of anguish, lulled her lord to rest.

Soon as she raised her eyes, with shuddering awe,
A fearful shape before her stand she saw.
Bright as the sun his fearful visage glowed,
And red like blood his wild apparel showed.
Crowned like a king, he looked no earthly lord;
He held no sceptre, but a noose of cord.
He stood terrific by her husband's side,
And with a look of fire the sleeper eyed.
Upon the ground she laid her husband's head,
Sprang up with suppliant hands, and trembling said:
"In guise like thine no mortal shapes appear:
What God art thou, and wherefore art thou here?"
"Won by thy virtues, good and faithful dame,
I speak," he answered, "and declare my name.
YAMA am I, the God of Death, whose sway
All creatures own that see the light of day.
His hour is come; and I am here to bear
Far hence the spirit that I may not spare.
I could not leave so bright and pure a soul
To my fierce angels and their wild control."
Thus YAMA spoke, and, bending to the ground,
Fast in the noose the sleeper's spirit bound.

Then lay the body motionless and dead,
All the grace vanished and the beauty fled.
Then YAMA southward turned his steps; and still
SAVITRI followed, with unchanging will.
"Turn back, sweet lady, turn thy steps," he cried;
"Full well this day thy faith and love has tried.
Go, and at home his funeral rites prepare;
No further duty claims thy tender care."
"The path he chooses, or by force is led,
Still will his wife," she said, "unflinching tread.
Still let me follow, if my fear of sin
And love of virtue may thy favour win.
Seven steps together give a sacred claim—
Thus say the wise—to friendship's honoured name."
"Charmed by thy words," he cried, "a boon I give:
Ask what thou wilt, except that he may live."
"My husband's sire," she said, "still mourns the day
That left him eyeless, to his foes a prey.
Grant that his realm may hail its rightful lord,
His glory doubled and his sight restored."
"I grant thy prayer," he cried: "return, fair saint,
Lest thy limbs fail thee, and thy spirit faint."

" Can I be weary, when my lord is near?
" Lead on," she cried, " and still with favour hear.
The best religion is to injure nought
That lives on earth, in deed, or word, or thought:
This is religion; and the good will show
Mercy and kindness to their bitter foe."
" Well hast thou said," cried YAMA: " ask again,
And, save his life, thou shalt not ask in vain."
" Grant that a hundred sons of noble fame
May spread the glories of my father's name."
'T was thus she spoke. Nor YAMA's voice delayed
To grant the boon the gentle lady prayed.
Once more he bade her go, nor longer stay,
So far the distance, and so rough the way.
" I know not distance, if my lord be by;
No way is rough," she said, " if he be nigh.
Onward, still onward, speeds my eager mind;
Still let my words a gracious hearing find.
Thou, King of justice, offspring of the Sun,
Lookest with equal eye on every one.
Those who are wise will ever place their trust,
Not in themselves, but in the good and just.

Gladly to these their trusting love they give,
Whose loving kindness blesses all that live."
" Wise are thy words: ne'er yet spake woman so:
Ask once again," he said, " and homeward go."
" Grant me," she cried, " to my dear lord to bear
Sons strong, and virtuous, and brave, and fair."
" Yea, goodly sons," cried he, " thy halls shall throng:
Now go, sweet lady; for the way is long."
" No, YAMA, no; the good, at duty's call,
Press firmly onward, and persist through all.
Though the heart languish, and the foot be weak,
Through toil and danger still their way they seek.
But, oh! what comfort, in the hour of fear
If some good brother come, their road to cheer!
The good, prevailing by their truth and worth,
Guide the bright Day-God and uphold the earth:
The worlds for safety on the good rely;
And the good faint not when the good are nigh."
" So sweet thy words are, I no more refuse
To grant," he said, " the boon that thou shalt choose."
" Now shall my soul be glad, my heart rejoice:
No limit now," she cried, " confines my choice.

All joys I spurn, when severed from my love,
All raptures here below, all bliss above.
Now, YAMA, now the boon I long for give,
And let my SATYAVAN, my dearest, live."
Then answered YAMA: "O thou faithful wife,
For thy dear sake I grant thy husband's life.
Blest, very blest, with thee he long shall reign,
And, just and pious, fame and glory gain.
Thy children shall be kings; and thou shalt be
Rich in the blessings that I promised thee."
The God departed; and the lady sped
Back to the spot where lay her husband dead.
Over his side she bent, his hand she pressed,
And laid his head upon her beating breast.
Then life, returning, warmed once more his frame,
And sense and knowledge to their mansion came.
On her he gazed with fond and wondering eyes,
Like one who long has roamed 'neath distant skies,
And cried "How long have I been sleeping here?
Where is that shape that filled my soul with fear?
At early morn I left our home with thee;
This fruit I gathered, and I felled this tree;

Then, faint with toil, I sank upon thy breast:
This I remember: tell me all the rest.
Say, did I see, or sleeping fancy draw,
That swarthy form that fills me yet with awe?"
"Rise up," she answered, "from the chilly ground;
The shades of night are closing fast around:
See, the damp dews upon thy raiment fall;
At morn, my dearest, I will tell thee all.
Hark! the night-roaming beasts already prowl:
How my heart flutters at their angry howl!"
"Yes, dark and fearful is the wood," he cried;
"And how can I thy feeble footsteps guide?"
"A tree," she said, "stood burning, as we came:
The wind has fanned it, and I see the flame.
I'll fetch a brand, a fire to kindle here:
The wood is ready: grieve not, husband dear.
Still art thou weak. Then rest we here to-night,
And homeward go with morning's earliest light."
"The pain has left me, and my limbs are strong:
Come, let us haste," he said; "we stay too long.
Ne'er have I stayed from home so long away:
My mother mourns me since the close of day.

Think with what anguish she must weep and wait,
Who oft has fondly chid me: 'Why so late?
Thou art our staff; on thee our hopes depend;
By thee we live; with thee our lives must end.'
"Come, dear SAVITRI, let us now depart,
And, hastening homeward, cheer each grieving heart."

Up sprang SAVITRI, bound her loosened hair,
And helped her lord to rise, with loving care.
When, as in hers her husband's hand she took,
She saw him sadly on the burthen look,
The loaded basket on her head she placed,
And tied the hatchet to her dairty waist.
By her supported, on her neck he leant,
And towards their home her guiding steps she bent.

In that sad home what anxious watch was kept!
How, with his sight restored, the hermit wept!
The aged parents, in their wild unrest,
Sought through the forest, weary and distrest,
When the leaves rustled, as the breezes sighed,
"Hark! 't is SAVITRI, and our boy," they cried.
Their naked feet, by brambles wounded, bled,
As through the tangled brake they onward sped.

There pitying hermits found the mourning pair,
And led them home, and sought to soothe their care.
There for a while their spirits were consoled
With stirring tales of warrior-kings of old;
Till, minded thus of all their boy had done,
And all the glory that his youth had won,
They raised their bitter cry, "Alas! my son, my son!"
Oh! rapturous moment, when the parents shed
Cool tears of joy o'er those they mourned as dead.
Scarce did they mark the heralds at the gate,
Who came to call them back to royal state.
"The tyrant-king," the herald cried, "is slain;
The nation calls thee to thy throne again.
Thy praise is loud in every joyous street:
Come, honoured monarch to thy fathers' seat."
Gladly the king the people's call obeyed,
And hastened homeward, as the nation prayed.
Lord of that ancient kingdom, rich and fair,
He called Prince SATYAVAN his rule to share.
Then, in due time, as YAMA's lips had sworn,
Of fair SAVITRI many a son was born;
And noble brothers, brave and dear to fame,
Upheld the glories of her father's name.

Dilípa.

First Manu reigned, revered by every sage,
First, like the mystic word in Scripture's page.
From him Dilípa traced his high descent,
Of his pure race the purest ornament.
Tall and broad-shouldered, stout and strong of limb,
Valour incarnate fixed her throne in him.
Matchless in beauty and heroic might,
He towered like Meru in his lofty height.
Meet for his godlike form, his noble mind
To worthy studies in his youth inclined:
Thence great designs inspired his generous soul,
And mighty deeds with glory crowned the whole.
With kingly virtues gentle yet severe,
His subjects loved him, but they loved in fear.

We love the pearls that lie 'neath ocean's waves,
But dread the monsters in his gloomy caves.
His loving people followed him, their guide,
Nor turned from MANU's Law one step aside:
And well they knew the tax they gladly paid
For their advantage on the realm was laid.
The bounteous sun delights to drink the lakes,
But gives ten thousandfold the wealth he takes.
Though troops in harness, ranged before his gate,
Kept watch and ward, to swell his royal state,
Yet all success, each triumph o'er the foe,
Sprang from his wisdom or his ready bow.
Prudent and calm, no tell-tale look revealed
His secret thoughts, from every eye concealed.
As, in the present life, our joys and woes
Our former virtues and our crimes disclose,
So, crowned with full success, events alone
Proved his wise plans and made his counsels known.
He honoured prudence, though he scorned to fear;
Youthful and strong, his virtue was sincere.
He gathered riches, but he freely gave;
And pleasure blessed him, but could ne'er enslave.

Contrasted virtues, ceasing to contest,
Reigned, like fond sisters, in the prince's breast:
With silence, wise; with might, to anger slow;
A lavish monarch, but averse from show.
Skilled in all lore, unharmed by pleasure's sway,
He grew in years, but felt no power decay;
His people's father, guardian, friend, and guide:
Their sires were others; he was all beside.
Thus, as he ruled his kingdom to maintain,
And married wives a father's joy to gain,
No selfish aims his noble spirit knew;
For Virtue formed his Gain and Pleasure too.
To gladden Heaven with gifts, the earth he drained;
On earth, in answer, gracious INDRA rained:
And thus to each a glorious boast was given,
That INDRA fostered earth, DILÍPA, Heaven.
What other prince this lofty praise could claim,
That theft was only, in his realm, a name?
He honoured merit, though it graced a foe;
As sick men medicine's healing virtue know:
While worthless friends were banished from his sight;
Like fingers poisoned by a serpent's bite.

DILÍPA.

The good Creator made, for all to share,
The earth and water, ether, fire and air;
Thus too he formed DILÍPA, sent to bless,
And find his own in others' happiness.
He ruled the earth, from rival sceptre free,
Like one vast city girdled by the sea.
His Queen was daughter of the royal race
Of MAGADH,—lovely both in mind and face;
And, if his love was shared by girls besides,
She and dear Fortune were his only brides.
One boon was wanting to the monarch's joy;
His were all blessings save that best, a boy.
Oh, how he longed, that childless King, to see
A royal infant smiling on her knee,
With his dear mother's eyes and face divine,
A second self to ornament his line!
One hope is left,—to seek the hermit's cell,
And to his holy guide, VASISHTHA, tell
The longing of his soul: his ancient friend
May give some counsel that his grief may end.
To chosen ministers he trusts the weight
Of all his royal sway and cares of state.

To God, the great Creator, first he pays
His humble worship, and for offspring prays;
Then, with the Queen, ascends his car, that tells
His coming with the music of its bells.
Have ye ne'er seen an elephant on high
Borne on his cloudy chariot through the sky?
Have ye ne'er seen the flashing lightning ride,
In sportive beauty, by the monster's side?
So seemed it now: so tall and strong was he;
So bright, so dazzling in her beauty, she.
Few are their guards: a thousand trampling feet
Would mar the quiet of the Saint's retreat;
But yet a circling host seems ever there;
For such divinity doth hedge that pair.
Fresh on their cheeks the soft wind gently blows,
Wafting the perfume of the woodland rose,
And, heavy with the dust of rifled flowers,
Waves the young branches of the Mango bowers.
They hear the peacock's joyous cry,—his head
Lifted in wonder at the coursers' tread.
They watch the cranes in jubilant armies fly,
Crowning, like flowers, the portals of the sky.

From shady coverts by the way the deer
Throw startled glances when the car is near;
Then, as they gaze, the king with pride compares
His soft-eyed lady's tender look with theirs.
A friendly wind attends them on their way,
And augurs fortune ere the close of day:
No dust may fall upon the lady's dress,
Stain her soft cheek, or dim one shining tress;
While, like her breath, sweet odours, fresh and cool,
Steal from the lilies on the ruffled pool.
Shining in beauty, robed in purest white,
Like spring's best planet, and the Lord of Night,
Through towns they pass, and many a hamlet fair,
Founded and cherished by their royal care;
While white-robed priests attend, a holy train,
Bless their beloved Prince, nor bless in vain.
Nor do they scorn the gifts that shepherds bring,—
Curds and new milk,—their tribute to the King,
But kindly bid the happy peasants say
What trees are those whose branches shade the way.
With eager eyes he shows the wondering Queen
The varied beauties of each woodland scene.

Lost in delight, they reach the hermit's cot;
The journey 's ended, but they mark it not.
Evening is come, and, weary of the road,
The horses rest before the Saint's abode,
Crowded with hermits from the forests near,
Seeking their grass, and fruit, and fuel here.
There playful fawns their daily rice await,
Thronging like children round the cottage gate;
And, in the garden, hermits' daughters o'er
Each young tree's thirsty roots fresh water pour,
Then stand aside, that timid birds may drink
Their share, in quiet, ere the stream can sink.
Quick from the car the King and Queen descend,
And turn impatient towards their saintly friend.
The hermits welcome him with honours due,
And kindly greet the royal lady, too;
Then lead them on where sits the ancient Sage,
With the Great Matron, in the hermitage.
Welcomed with gentle looks and words most sweet,
The royal pair embrace their sacred feet.
And then VASISHTHA, after food and rest,
Asks of his kingdom's weal his honoured guest.

Cheered by his kindness, thus replies the King,
The best of speakers, to his questioning:
" Safe in thy love, I dread no living foe;
Thy friendship, Sage, protects from every woe;
Vain are my arrows, vain all earthly arms;
For thou hast blest me with thy mystic charms.
Heaven hears thy voice: thou bidst the flame arise,
To call down water from obedient skies.
My people thrive, from grief and sickness free;
And all these blessings, Saint, we owe to thee.
With thee, great lord, to counsel and befriend,
The bliss thou sendest surely ne'er should end;
But Mother Earth, whom tears nor prayers have won,
Is still ungracious, and denies a son.
She teems with jewels, and can, yet, withhold
One treasure lovelier than gems and gold.
The spirits of my fathers pine to see
No hope of funeral offerings after me;
And, if they taste the drink my care supplies,
They taste it heated with unceasing sighs.
As LOKÁLOKA'S chain, with one side bright,
The other buried in eternal night,

Pure is my soul, through sacrifice and prayer;
But all the rest is dark without an heir.
Thou knowest in the world to come our bliss
Springs from our Penance and good works in this;
But he to whom a saviour son is given
Finds peace on earth and endless joy in Heaven.
Dear guide and guardian, thou would'st grieve to see
No golden blossoms on the favourite tree
Thou hast so often watered; and, when I,
Thy friend, am childless, wilt thou check the sigh?
Oh, aid me in my woe! 'T is ever thine
To bring good succour to our ancient line."

He spake. One instant, ere the Sage replies,
He fixes, in deep thought, his searching eyes;
Still as some lake, at summer's noon, when deep
In sunless caverns lie the fish asleep.
He saw the cause with more than human ken;
And thus the Sage addressed the King of men:
"Dost thou remember when, supremely blest,
INDRA in Heaven received thee as his guest?
Thence as thou camest, on thy homeward way,
The holy Cow beneath the shadow lay

Of the Celestial Tree: thy thoughts were far
Far absent; as the thoughts of lovers are,
When absent from their loves: thy heedless eye
Saw not, or marked not, as thou camest by.
Then thus she cursed thee: 'As thine impious pride
The reverence Kings should pay me has denied,
Now shall no offspring bless thy royal line,
Till thou hast paid all honours due to mine.'
The curse she uttered failed to reach thine ear,
So loud the voice of GANGA foaming near,—
Celestial GANGA, boiling o'er with spray
Dashed up by heavenly elephants at play.
For this dishonour to the holy Cow,
Unhonoured, childless, thou art suffering now.
Woe and misfortune ever are their fate
Who pay not reverence to the good and great.
Now in the under-world she dwells to aid
The dreary vow that old PRACHETAS made;
Then, in her stead, this Cow, her offspring, take,
And pay her honour for her mother's sake.
Win, with all care, her love; for she can pour
All blessings on thee from her boundless store."

The hermit ceased. Quick from the grove she came,
Young NANDINI, the cow that blessed the flame
Of sacrificial worship. Dusky red
Was her fair body; on her sacred head
A crescent lock of curling silvery hair
Shone like the young moon in the evening air.
As, with maternal love, her calf she viewed,
Full streams of holy milk the ground bedewed;
While the dust raised beneath her sacred feet
Fell on the monarch's head with influence sweet.
"Rejoice!" the hermit cried; "thy bliss is near:
Her name scarce uttered, see! the Cow is here.
Now feed on fruit, and what the wood supplies,
And watch her every step with careful eyes:
By constant toil is sacred lore attained;
So shall her love by ceaseless care be gained.
Watch all her movements, be her actions thine;
Walk when she walks, and, when she rests, recline;
And let thy lady, at the break of day,
Far as the sacred grove protect her way.
Then go, and prosper. Blessed shalt thou be,
And among fathers none shall equal thee."

The King and Queen before the hermit bent,
And to his bidding gave a glad consent;
Then sought the leafy lodging, where they found
Their bed of sweet grass heaped upon the ground.
Ere yet with early dawn the sky was red,
The anxious couple left their humble bed.
She culled fresh garlands for the holy Cow,
And poured sweet perfumes o'er her sacred brow.
Then in her steps that royal matron trod;
As the Law follows close the word of God.
Far as the forest's darksome edge she went,
Then left her husband on his charge intent.
Not less his care than if that Cow had been
Earth with her teeming oceans, Earth the Queen.
No servants followed; for their own strong arm
Guards MANU's children from all scathe and harm.
Close to the Cow, he kept the flies away,
Fed her with grass and many a tender spray.
To win her love, he gently stroked her head,
Checked not her steps, but followed where she led.
With her he stood, with her he sought repose,
Drank when she drank, and, when she moved, arose.

When from his brow no tell-tale oozings flow,
The forest elephant's wild heat to show,
Ye mark his fury—as he rushes by—
In the red lightning of his troubled eye.
Thus, when his kingly state was laid aside,
His royal robes and ornaments of pride,
Ye could not see DILÍPA, but to swear
A king indeed, a glorious king, was there.
As he moved onwards, beautiful and strong,
The glad birds hailed him with their gayest song,
And, shaken by the breeze, young creepers shed
A coronet of flowers upon his head.
From shady coverts, as he passed, the deer
Gazed on the gentle king, and knew no fear;
While, as the breezes filled the tuneful reeds,
He heard the Wood-Sylphs laud his glorious deeds.
When faint and sinking 'neath the glare of day,
A gentle zephyr round his head would play,
And, stealing dew-drops from the mountain springs,
Waft cooling odours on its balmy wings.
Peace reigned around him as the monarch came;
Unquenched by showers, the forest ceased to flame;

The trees glowed brighter with their fruits of gold,
The lion slew not, and the fawn was bold.
Now o'er the woods the shades of evening fell:
The herd of boars forsook the marshy dell;
His leafy home the weary peacock eyed;
And trooping deer to grassy coverts hied.
Then, faint with watching for her lord, the dame
Forth from the hermitage, to meet him, came,
And feasted on his face with eyes that ne'er
Could quench their growing thirst with gazing there.
In fairest beauty stood the Cow between
The splendid monarch and the gentle queen;
As the soft glory of the evening's light
With purest lustre parts the day and night.
With reverent steps, the lady round her passed,
And from a bowl parched grain in worship cast;
Then paid due honour to her spacious brow,—
That door to lead the lady to her vow.
Though yearning for her young, the Cow stood still,
Delighted with the worship, while a thrill
Of hopeful joy ran through each royal breast:
Such marks of favour show their vow is blest.

The King, with hands whose might no foe could meet,
Gently embraced his ancient Teacher's feet,
Performed the evening rites, and turned to pay
The holy Cow fresh homage where she lay.
His thoughtful care her every want supplied;
He placed a lamp and fodder by her side,
And, when she lay upon her grassy bed,
He on his lady's breast reposed his head.
When the Cow slept, he bade his eyelids close;
When she had risen, from his couch arose.
Thus toiling still, upon his vow intent,
Thrice seven long days the anxious monarch spent.

There was a grass-hid cavern, dark and deep,
Where GANGA thunders down HIMÁLAYA'S steep:
The Cow had entered; but her guardian still
Looked, lost in wonder, on the glorious hill,
Nor feared for her: no beast would dare to spring,
Even in thought, on so divine a thing.
Suddenly, lurking in the cavern's shade,
A lion seized her; and her cries for aid
Drew the King's wondering eyes. With grief and awe,
The monster standing o'er the Cow he saw;

Like a red Lodhra tree whose limbs surround
The ore-rich summit of a lofty mound.
He seized an arrow, and his bright nails shed
O'er its white feathers gleams of rosy red.
Why doth he linger? What resistless charm
Checks his bold hand, and binds his eager arm?
He stood as in a picture; and his bow
Availed him nothing, though so near the foe.
High rose his fury: but he raged in vain;
Like a mad snake that magic herbs restrain.

A greater marvel, when, with voice of man,
The lion, holding still his prey, began:
"Cease to contend. Thine arrow, launched at me,
Though erring never, now in vain would be.
The tree may fall beneath the tempest's force;
But the firm-rooted hill resists its course.
For know, the servant of the Lord Most High
Who wears at will eight various forms, am I;
And, when his dusky Bull he deigns to ride,
He sets his foot upon my honoured side.
Look yonder, King. Before thee stands a Pine,
Loved like a daughter by my Lord divine:

In its first youth 't was gentle UMA's joy
To nurse it, even as she nursed her boy;
And, when an elephant once hurt her tree,
She mourned for it, as she would mourn to see
Her own young War-God wounded by the bows
Of Heaven's fierce enemies, his demon foes.
Since then, obedient to my Lord's command,
In lion's form, to guard this tree, I stand,
To scare wild elephants, and feed on deer
That, tempted by the herbage, wander near.
Now, sweet as to the Gods' tremendous foe
The streams of Amrit from the Moon that flow,
In her appointed hour, my destined prey,
This Cow has come to be my feast to-day.
Return, O King, return. The Saint can claim
No further duty from thee. Feel no shame:
For loss of treasures that no might can save
Stains not the glory of the good and brave."
The King no more his humbled power disdained;
For SIVA's might, he knew, his arm restrained,—
His conquering arm: for ne'er had mortal foe
Stayed the fierce tempest of his vengeful bow;

And even INDRA, with hand raised high,
To launch his bolt, was checked by SIVA's eye.
"Foolish," he said, "my words may seem to be;
Yet will I speak; for minds are known to thee.
That God is ever by my soul adored,
Maker, Preserver, and Destroying Lord:
But how can I, unblamed, my charge neglect,—
This helpless creature whom the saints respect?
Hear, King of Beasts, my prayer, and, if thou wilt,
Feed on my blood, but let not her's be spilt.
Her calf will mourn her at the hour of eve:
Then take my life; the Cow uninjured leave."
The lion, with a smile, his answer gave,
His bright teeth flashing through the murky cave:
"Ay, mad I deem thee, monarch, to resign
Thy youth, thy life, and that fair form of thine,
And universal empire;—these to give,
All these for ever, that a cow may live.
Dost thou love creatures? While thy death, O King,
To this one cow a longer life will bring,
Blest by thy reign a thousand homes would be;
For all thy people look to only thee.

Live, and be happy. Power and might bestow
Joy like a God's, and make a Heaven below.
But, if thou tremblest at thy master's ire,
And fearest anger that consumes like fire,
Instead of her, ten thousand others give,
With teeming udders, that thy soul may live."

The lion ceased. The mountain's hollow side
Echoed his counsel ere the Prince replied:
"What! shall a King forsake—unkingly deed—
The helpless suppliant in her hour of need?
Shall I disgrace a monarch's proudest name,
And barter glory for a life of shame?
How can the gift of other cows assuage
The just resentment of the holy Sage?
For she is daughter of a race divine,
Subdued by SIVA's power, and not by thine.
Then for her life let mine a ransom be:
Feed on my flesh; but let the Cow go free.
Still, King of Beasts, thy hunger will be stayed,
Still will the Saint enjoy her holy aid:
And thou, another's thrall, dost surely know—
E'en as thy care of this young pine may show—

That servants heedless of their duty must
Bow down their heads in shame for broken trust.
Then, oh, have mercy, and mine honour spare!
A hero's body claims no hero's care.
Have we not parleyed in the wood to-day?
And friendship springs from parley, sages say.
Again I pray thee, thrall of SIVA, take
This my one offer, for our friendship's sake."
  The lion yielded; and DILÍPA cast
His arms upon the earth: the spell at last
Had left him free: then, fixing on the ground
His calm eyes, waited for the monster's bound.
But suddenly there came a rain of flowers
Poured down upon him by the Heavenly Powers,
And, sweet as Amrit, came a voice that said
"Arise, dear son!" He raised, in joy, his head,
And saw no lion, but that Cow, as mild
As a fond mother bending o'er her child.
"Now have I proved thy love," she cried, "dear son:
That lion was a phantom: thou hast done
Thy duty nobly; for thou didst not know
That Death himself can never work me woe.

Now choose a boon; for I have boundless power
On those I love all precious gifts to shower."
He raised his hands,—those warlike hands whose might
Had won a hero's fame in many a fight,
And begged a son, to propagate his line,—
A son, whose glory should for ever shine.
"Thy prayer is granted," said the Cow; "but drain
My milky store, and drink, thy wish to gain."
"Nay, when that store has fed thy calf," he cried,
"And all that 's needed for the rites supplied,
Then, at the Saint's command, I'll drink the rest,
And deem the draught among all draughts the best."
Pleased with his words, nor with her wanderings faint,
She turned, and reached the dwelling of the Saint.
To him DILÍPA, with o'erflowing heart,
The joyful tidings hastened to impart;
And, though the Queen had read his looks aright,
He told her all again with new delight.
Then, at the bidding of the Saint, he quaffed
Of NANDINÍ's pure milk a precious draught,
As though, with thirst that rises from the soul,
He drank eternal glory from the bowl.

With many a blessing, at the dawn of day
The guests were sped upon their homeward way,
After due honour to the holy flame,
To old VASISHTHA, and his gentle dame.
Swift towards their home the eager horses bound;
The car makes music o'er the grassy ground:
They reach the city, where the people wait,
Longing to meet their monarch, at the gate.
Dim are his eyes, his cheek is pale, his brow
Still bears deep traces of his weary vow.

As on the pale new moon we bend our eyes,
Again appearing in the evening skies,
So gazed the crowds, and could not gaze their fill,
On him so worn, so thin, so lovely still.
With loud acclaim their honoured King they greet,
While flags by thousands wave in every street.
He comes, he comes! Now will his arm again
The mighty burthen of the world sustain,
Strong as the King of Serpents that upholds
Earth resting firmly on his endless folds.

Not mine to tell how hopeful months flew by,
While day by day DILÍPA'S joy grew high.

DILÍPA.

No tongue may say how lovely flowers of earth
At nature's bidding gently spring to birth.
Blest was the hour, and all the world was gay,
When the sweet infant saw the light of day:
A rosy glow suffused the brightening sky;
A pleasant breeze came breathing softly by;
High in the heavens five brilliant planets shone,
Blessing the child they looked so kindly on;
And joyful Nature promised endless bliss;
For the world triumphs in a babe like this.
There was a glory round the infant's head,
That poured strange lustre o'er his mother's bed;
And e'en the unlit torches seemed to shine,
As in a picture, with that light divine.
What worthy guerdon shall the maiden claim
Who hailed DILÍPA by a father's name?
Save but the royal emblems, she may take
All he possesses, for her tidings' sake.
He fed upon the infant's face with eyes
Still as a lotus when no winds arise;
Nor could he, gazing on his child, control
The tide of rapture that o'erflowed his soul;

As Ocean ne'er can check his billows' swell,
When shines the full moon whom he loves so well.
Though bright the jewel in the parent hill,
The workman's art adds lustre brighter still.
Fair was that child; but, when all rites were done,
Still greater glory clothed DILÍPA'S son.
Through the wide palace of the joyful King
Fair girls are dancing, song and music ring;
While, in the skies, the Gods the rapture share,
And the glad music sounds in concert there.
No captive wept within the King's domains,
Or that auspicious day had loosed his chains:
Freed is he only,—doomed no more to pine
'Neath the great debt he owed his fathers' line.
Like some young God's that baby's face was fair;
And happy as the Gods, that mortal pair.
SACHI and INDRA, in their home above,
Were not more blest in their JAYANTA'S love;
Not UMA, when her new-born darling smiled;
Not SIVA, joying in his warrior-child.
True as the Love-birds, in whose faithful breast,
Save of their partner, not a thought can rest,

Thus had they lived; and now this infant came
To share their love, and yet increase the flame.
What joy thrilled through him, when the father heard
His dear boy lisping forth his earliest word,
And saw him, clinging to the nurse's hand,
Salute his sire, and, trembling, try to stand!
And, when he held his baby to his breast,
And loving kisses on his lips impressed,
He learnt, at length, that inexpressive joy
None but a father knows who clasps his own dear boy.

Now time flew by. He wore the sacred cord;
And holy men his mind with wisdom stored;
Till, as the Sun-God, in his car on high,
Urges his storm-fleet coursers through the sky,
He passed triumphant through the four-fold lore,
That mighty sea, from shore to distant shore.
In early manhood's prime, his father's care
Gained him the hands of maidens young and fair,—
Then fairer far than ever, each dear grace
Stealing new beauty from their lover's face;

Like DAKSHA's daughters, whom the Lord of Night
Dowers with a portion of his own sweet light.
Soon as DILÍPA saw his heir was fit,
In sense and learning, by his side to sit,
He made him partner of his royal throne,
And shared the weight he long had borne alone.
As Beauty seeks the opening lotus-bud,
And quits the flower that long has decked the flood;
So Fortune left the father for the son,
And lived his consort by his virtues won.
Who can resist the conquering flame's career,
Whirled by the Wind, his eager charioteer?
Check the wild elephant with maddened eye,
Or the Sun's glory in a cloudless sky?
And where the monarch that will dare to fight,
When such a son assists his father's might?
In glory thus DILÍPA's days flew by,
Till, longing only for his home on high,
Mindful of duties by the Scriptures taught,
From worldly cares he drew his every thought,

Resigned the white umbrella to his heir,
And all the signs of sovereign rule to bear;
Then sought a tranquil dwelling, with his Queen,
Where Hermits live beneath their leafy screen:
For such, through ages, in their life's decline,
Is the good custom of the Sun-born line.

Fragments.

The Address to Vishnu.

As weary wanderers, by the heat opprest,
Seek the dark shadow of a tree for rest,
So, faint with terror, crushed by grief and woe,
The Gods sought Vishnu's aid against their foe.
Soon as their feet the shores of Ocean trod,
Waked from his slumber, rose the mightiest God:
Omen of triumph, when the great arise
At the first summons to the bold emprise,
There lay the God upon his Serpent-bed,
While every jewel in each glittering head
Of that tremendous Snake its radiance poured
Upon the limbs of his reclining lord.
Over the shoulders of the God was drawn
A garment tinted like the early dawn;

THE ADDRESS TO VISHNU.

Bright flashed his eyes, like lotuses that wake
When the sun shines upon their native lake;
And the God showed, in all his bright array,
Like the glad morning of an autumn day.
On his broad breast that famous gem he wore,
Old Ocean's proudest boast in days of yore;
O'er the God's mystic mark its blaze it threw,
And served fair LAKSHMI as a mirror too,
The while she rested on her lotus-seat,
And in her lap upheld her husband's feet.
The living weapons, by his side that lie,
Lifted their voices in triumphant cry;
And by his Master's side, his constant place,
Stood GARUD, Monarch of the feathered race:
Sheathed were his claws, forgotten was his hate
Of the great Snake that bears his Master's weight.
Then, as the Saints the chains of slumber broke,
And from their trance of deep devotion woke,—
When their bright eyes again with glory shone,
Cleansing all creatures that they looked upon,—
He smiled, in answer to their words, addrest
With lowly greeting, asking of his rest.

THE ADDRESS TO VISHNU.

Then bowed the Gods, and by each heavenly tongue
The matchless victor of the fiends was sung,
Worthy of praise in Heaven, and earth below,
Though none can tell him, and no heart can know:
"Glory to thee in triple form adored,
Creator, Saviour, and Destroying Lord!
Each of these forms, unchanging God! is thine,
E'en as the mystic Triad may assign;
So to the rain-drop, coming pure from Heaven,
Where'er it falls, a different taste is given.
Boundless! the world before Thee bounded lies;
No wish hast Thou, but bidst the wish arise.
Victor, unvanquished! Never seen! from Thee
Spring all the creatures that the eye can see.
Though far away, Thou dwellest in each heart;
With no desire, in Penance bearest part.
Full of compassion, Thou canst feel no woe;
Ancient of Days, but age canst never know.
Omniscient Lord, but known to none art Thou;
Subject to none, to Thee all creatures bow.
Maker of all things, Self-existent still;
One, yet the wearer of all forms at will.

THE ADDRESS TO VISHNU.

Praised in the seven great hymns, for Thee are spread
The seven vast Oceans for Thy wondrous bed.
Thy mouth the seven-fold flame that blazes high;
All the seven worlds to Thee for refuge fly.
All from Thy four-fold mouth, O God, proceed:
The holy lore that seeks the four-fold meed;
Time, with its Ages four, from Thee began;
From Thee, with four-fold caste, the race of Man.
O Light, that dwellest in the humble breast,
Sought by pure Hermits for eternal rest!
None e'er may know Thee, God without a birth,
Yet born in many a mortal form on earth.
God without passions, slayer of Thy foes,
Awake for ever, sunk in deep repose!
Thou hast a pleasure in the joys of Sense,
E'en in the midst of sternest Abstinence;
Thou canst look on unmoved, yet come to aid,
And save from woe, the people Thou hast made.
What though in Scripture many a way we see
That leads to Bliss, they all unite in Thee:
Thus holy GANGA's branching stream is poured,
By many a channel, to her Ocean lord.

To those who fix on Thee their heart and mind,
And trust in Thee, with every wish resigned,
Thou art the way that leads to endless joy,
Which none can lose again, nor time destroy.
By none that lives Thy glory may be told,
Whose shade on earth men's wondering eyes behold.
What tongue can tell Thee? That Thou art, alone,
Is from the pages of the Veda known.
The pearls are brighter than the Sea; the Sun
Is, in pure lustre, by his rays outdone;
So are Thy deeds more glorious than the praise
Our feeble tongues, O Lord, to Thee can raise.
What must their gain, who serve Thee truly, be,
When souls are cleansed by the mere thought of Thee!
For the World's good Thy mighty deeds were wrought;
All things are Thine, and Thou canst wish for nought:
Now if no more in praise of Thee we speak,
Thy glories fail not, but our tongues are weak."

With truthful words the dwellers in the sky
Thus spoke the praises of the God most High,
And sought the favour of their Lord to win,
Who loves the pure from every thought of sin.

His gracious questions made the suppliants bold;
And all their peril, all their grief, they told:—
How RÁVAN threatened, like a sea that o'er
His banks, unbidden, dared his floods to pour.
Then VISHNU spake. His voice, that echoed round,
From cave to cave, the din of Ocean drowned.
His speech came shining through His teeth's white gleam;
As from His foot flows GANGA's holy stream:

"I know that RÁVAN scorns you, in his might;
As mental Darkness conquers Truth and Light.
Vexed by his rage, the Worlds can find no rest;
Like a good heart by heedless sin distrest.
Nor in our common cause need INDRA's prayer
Implore me now the mighty task to share.
The Wind, uncalled, is ever watching near,
To be the Fire's own willing charioteer.
From BRAHMÁ's favour, by his Penance won,
The Demon gained the boon he sought, that none
Among the Gods should slay him, but forgot
To guard his life from man, or feared him not.
I will be born as DASARATHA's child;
Cleft by my arrows shall his heads be piled,

Like lotus-flowers, upon the battle-plain,
And be my offering, when the foe is slain.
Again, O Gods, the flame in peace shall glow,
Again shall waft you offerings from below;
Nor shall the shadowy Fiends that roam by night
Distress the Priests, or mar the sacred rite.
No more the Saint, borne in his heavenly car,
Shall mark the Demon's chariot from afar;
No more, in fear, to shading clouds shall fly,
But move at will, untroubled, through the sky.
Now bid the Maids of Heaven again unbind
Their locks so long in mournful braids confined:
Slain by my hand, no more shall RÁVAN dare
To seize, with impious grasp, their flowing hair."

The Flying Car.

THEN RÁMA, speeding on his airy road,
The distant prospect to his darling showed:
"Look, SITA, look! Away to MALAYA's side
My causeway parts the Ocean's foamy tide.
Thus hast thou seen, on some fair autumn night,
When heaven is loveliest with its starry light,
From north to south a cloudy pathway spread,
Parting the deep dark firmament o'erhead.

Deep is that Sea; but deeper still, they say,
Our glorious fathers dug their eager way,
Following fast, when KAPIL dared to lead
Away to Hell their charge, the hallowed steed.
From the deep Sea the Sun-God draws the rain,
To pour it down in boundless wealth again.

And he supports the flame, whose ruthless power
Will, in ungrateful greed, the wave devour.
And from his depths arose the silver light
Of the dear Moon that charms the gazer's sight.
Changing in form, his waves are now at rest,
And peace is brooding on his tranquil breast.
Unknown, unmeasured! not a tongue can tell
His might, his nature, when his waters swell,
From sky to sky when his broad billows roll,
Boundless as VISHNU who pervades this Whole.
He lends his broad expanse for VISHNU's bed,
Whene'er, with rolling years, an age has fled;
When, all the worlds absorbed, the God Supreme,
Lost in self-contemplation, sinks to dream.
Whose glorious praise the Great Creator sings,
Couched on the lotus from his breast that springs.
He can protect. When INDRA's bolt had shorn
The proud Hills' pinions from their sides, and torn
Their rugged breasts, to him, in fear, they fled,
And found sure refuge in his gloomy bed.
And he can love. No bridegroom ever gave
Close kisses fast as his, whose eager wave

Drinks up the river's lips, and, foaming o'er,
Leaps, in a storm of passion, on the shore.
Look, SITA, look! Those monsters of the deep
Close by the river's mouth their station keep.
Soon as the waves have reached them, they have quaft
Water and fish together at a draught.
Now see! They shut their mouths, while, gushing out
From openings in their heads, high fountains spout.
Look! As one moment o'er the wave they rise,
With their broad backs, like elephants in size,
The parted foam-drops on their cheeks appear
Like chowries waving round each monster's ear.
Look how the Serpents lift their heads on high,
To catch the breezes as they wander by!
Curled like the curling waves on which they rest,
The eye would miss them, but each glittering crest
Catches a brightness from the sun, that throws
A glory on it, till each jewel glows.
See how the billows, in their furious swell,
Have cast on trees of Coral many a shell
That clings to branches, with thy lips that vie,
And there, with amorous clasp, would cling and die.

THE FLYING CAR.

See! In a moment, in this magic car,
We reach the strand that seemed but now so far,
Where groves of betel trees in order grow,
Hanging the burthen of their branches low,
And, cast by tempests from their ocean-bed,
Uncovered pearls upon the sands are spread.
Now, gentle SITA, let thy look be cast
Back o'er the way our flying car has past.
That land, that 's green with many a waving tree,
Seems to be rising from a distant sea.
Look! As I will, my heavenly chariot flies:
Now by the God's own path it nears the skies,
Now with the flight of birds its course it keeps,
Now skims the road the cloudy tempest sweeps.
Dost thou not feel the cool wind breathing now,
Sweet with the odours of AIRÁVAT'S brow,
And, damped by waves of GANGA'S triple stream,
Cooling thy forehead 'neath the morning's beam?
Look, look! Thy hand, upon the chariot placed,
With a new ornament is sweetly graced;
For this dark cloud, which flashing lightning rings,
Upon thy round fair arm its beauty flings.

And see! The Hermits, in their bark-coats drest,
In their own homes, so long deserted, rest:
Secure, again their leafy cots they rear;
For through the forest now is nought to fear.
There, in my frantic search for thee, I found
Thy well known anklet: but its silvery sound
Was heard no longer; and it seemed to me
Hushed in sad silence because far from thee.
The trees, in pity for my wild distress,
Guided my footsteps through the wilderness:
Their leaves all scattered and their branches bent
By the fierce giant, showed the way he went;
And startled deer forbore the tender spray,
Looked towards the South, and told the robber's way.
Madly I climbed the mountain-peaks that frown
Before us yonder; rain was pouring down,
And tears, like rain, from me. I sought thee there,
And, mourning for my darling, scarce could bear
The sweet cool smell of lakes and pleasant showers,
The beauty and the perfume of the flowers,
And all delights of sight, and sound, and smell;
For, without SITA, Heaven itself were Hell.

Yet my soul bore from mountain caves the loud
Re-echoed bellowing of the thunder-cloud;
Though, at the sound, rose scenes of past delight,
As I remembered, in the stormy night
How my love nestled nearer and more near,
Roused from her slumber by its voice of fear.
Then, as a mist o'erspread the steaming earth,
And many a bright bud quickly sprang to birth,
Within my tortured breast the past would rise,
And stab me with the memory of thine eyes,
Flashing through clouds of incense smoke, that lay
Floating around thee on our bridal day.

"Look far before us. See the distant gleam,
Through the thick reeds, of PAMPA's silver stream.
There, on the bank, I saw two Love-birds play,
And feed each other with a lotus-spray.
'Ah! happy birds!' I sighed, 'whom cruel fate
Dooms not to sorrow for an absent mate.'
Well I remember, in my wild despair
I thought a bright Asoka glowing there
Was SITA, was my dearest: LAKSHMAN clung
Around my neck, or I had wildly sprung,

With a great cry, to meet thee, and caresst
Its full round clusters for my darling's breast.
See! PANCHAVATI, with its gazing deer,
Delights my soul again; for it was here
My gentle SITA used, of old, to bring,
For her young trees, fresh water from the spring.
See troops of cranes, from sweet GODÁVARI'S shore
Lured by thy tinkling music, upwards soar.
The golden bells that hang upon thy feet
Guiding their flight, they come my love to greet.
O pleasant bank, O well-remembered place,
Where I so often, wearied with the chase,
Would throw me on the grass, and, while my brow
Was fanned by breezes from the river, thou
Wouldst talk so sweetly; and my head was laid
Upon thy lap, at evening, in the shade.
There was the Sage's home, whose very frown
From INDRA'S Heaven hurled mighty NAHUSH down:
Before his glance—so pure that holy man—
The muddy water clear and limpid ran.
See, through the trees, that shade its breast, the cool
Delicious waves of SATAKARNI'S pool,

Gleaming, half hidden by the boughs, as gleams
The moon when cloudlets partly veil his beams.
'T is said, the Saint, who shared the food of deer,
Filled INDRA's jealous breast with doubt and fear,
Till five fair maids of SWARGA's lovely train
Were sent to snare his soul, nor sent in vain.
In summer-houses 'neath the lake he dwells;
Thence, upward floating, sweetest music swells.
Hark, how the melody and moving song
Make the car echo, as it flies along.
There dwells a Hermit, pious, pure, and good,
Scorched by four blazing fires that burn the wood,
While on his head a fifth, the God of Day,
Pours down the fury of his ruthless ray.
See, bound to silence by his holy vow,
He bends in answer, as my head I bow,
Looks, for a moment, as we pass, and then
Fixes his gaze upon the Sun again.
There is a grove, the pure and safe abode
Where SARABHANGA's fire for ever glowed:
Long, long with wood the sacred flames he fed,
Then gave his holy body in its stead.

Still round his cottage, like an honoured band,
Laden with fruit, the trees, his daughters, stand.
Now to the left, dear SITA, turn thine eyes,
Where CHITRAKÚTA's lofty peaks arise.
Like some proud bull, he lifts his haughty crest:
See the dark cave, his mouth, and shaggy breast:
Now, like a clod in furious charge uptorn,
A cloud is hanging on his mighty horn.
See, how the river, with its lucid streams,
Like a pearl necklace, round the mountain gleams.
There lies the wood where holy ATRI lives,
And all his days to strictest Penance gives.
In that pure grove a thousand creatures roam,
And fear no evil in their sacred home.
There the blest trees await no bud's delay,
But burst to fruit on every laden spray.
There is the spot where ANUSUYA led
GANGA from Heaven, the crown of SIVA's head,—
GANGA, whose lotuses are plucked on high
By the great Seven who star the northern sky.
Here rolling down, the heavenly river gave,
To bathe the Saints, her purifying wave.

Upon their holy seats the Saints are still;
And thoughts of God their tranquil bosoms fill.
The trees that shade the altar move no spray,
And seem all lost in holy thought as they.
Look! From that tree with leaves of rosy red,
I twined a garland for my darling's head.
That fig-tree mark, with leaves of emerald green,
And fruit like rubies shining bright between:
Dost thou remember how thy prayer was prayed
For me, sweet love, beneath its friendly shade?
Now see the waves of JUMNA's stream divide
The fair-limbed GANGA's heaven-descended tide;
Distinct, though joined,—bright gleaming in the sun,—
Like pearls with sapphires mixed, the rivers run.
Thus, intertwined, the azure lotus through
Crowns of white lilies pours its shade of blue:
Thus, 'mid the swans that float on MÁNAS lake
Shine the dark gold-shot glories of the drake:
As though on Earth's fair brow, with hues more dark,
A line of ochre crossed the sandal mark:
Or like the Moon, whose silver radiance steals
Through the dark cloud that half its face conceals:

Or as a row of Autumn clouds, between
Whose shifting ranks the blue of heaven is seen :
Or Siva's body, with white ashes, round
Whose form a serpent's sable coils are wound :
Thus Ganga shines. So holy is the place
Where Ocean's wives, with meeting streams, embrace,
That he who quits his mortal body here,—
His mind, by bathing, from his sin washed clear,—
E'en without knowledge of the Godhead, gains
Eternal freedom from the body's chains.
And there runs Sarju's stream, which, Sages say,
Flows from the lake of Brahmá, far away,
Whose golden lotuses sweet dust provide
To stain the bosom of each Yaksha's bride :
With many an altar on her hallowed shores,
To fair Ayodhya's town her waves she pours,
Dear to my filial heart, O mother mine,
O common mother of our royal line !
Upon thine island-breasts we all were nursed,
And from thy bounteous streams we quenched our thirst.
Now gently smiling, as my mother smiled,
Welcome, with sweet cool breath, thy banished child ! "

Sita Banished.

'T WAS very sweet to Ráma's heart, at eve
The cares of council and of state to leave,
And, with his queen, the bright-eyed Sita, roam
Through the long chambers of his happy home,
And, in the pictures that adorned the hall,
Their woes and wanderings in the wood recall,
With the sweet feeling that remembered ill
Makes present pleasure more delightful still.

Then, day by day, the husband's hope grew high,
Gazing with love on Sita's melting eye:
With anxious care he saw her paling cheek,
And fondly bade her all her wishes speak.
"Once more I fain would see," the lady cried,
"The sacred groves that rise on Ganga's side,

Where holy grass is ever fresh and green,
And cattle feeding on the rice are seen:
There would I rest awhile, where once I strayed
Linked in sweet friendship to each Hermit maid."
And RÁMA smiled upon his wife, and sware,
With many a tender oath, to grant her prayer.

It chanced, one evening, from a lofty seat
He viewed AYODHYA stretched before his feet:
He looked with pride upon the royal road
Lined with gay shops their glittering stores that showed;
He looked on SARJU's silver waves, that bore
The light barks flying with the sail and oar;
He saw the gardens near the town that lay,
Filled with glad citizens, and boys at play.
Then swelled the monarch's bosom with delight,
And his heart triumphed at the happy sight.

He turned to BHADRA, standing by his side,—
Upon whose secret news the king relied,—
And bade him say what people said and thought
Of all the exploits that his arm had wrought.

The spy was silent, but, when questioned still,
Thus spake, obedient to his master's will:

SITA BANISHED.

"For all thy deeds in peace and battle done
Thy people praise thee, King, except for one:
This only act of all thy life they blame,—
Thy welcome home of her, thy ravished dame."
Like iron yielding to the iron's blow,
Sank RÁMA, smitten by these words of woe.
His breast, while love and fear for empire vied,
Swayed, like a rapid swing, from side to side.
Shall he this rumour scorn, that blots his life?
Or banish her, his dear, his spotless wife?
But rigid Duty left no choice between
His perilled honour and his darling queen.
Called to his side, his brothers wept to trace
The marks of anguish in his altered face.
No longer bright and glorious as of old,
He thus addressed them, when the tale was told:
"Alas! my brothers, that my life should blot
The fame of those the Sun himself begot;
As from a labouring cloud the driven rain
Leaves on the mirror's polished face a stain.
E'en as an elephant that loathes the stake
And the strong chain he has no power to break,

I cannot brook this cry on every side,
That spreads like oil upon the moving tide.
I leave the daughter of VIDEHA'S King,
And the fair blossom soon from her to spring,
As erst, obedient to my sire's command,
I left the empire of the sea-girt land.
Good is my queen, and spotless; but the blame
Is hard to bear, the mockery and the shame.
Men blame the pure moon for the darkened ray,
When earth's black shadow takes the light away.
And, O my brothers, if ye wish to see
Your RÁMA live, from this reproach set free,
Let not your pity labour to control
The firm sad purpose of his changeless soul."
Thus RÁMA spoke. The sorrowing brothers heard
His stern resolve, without an answering word;
For none among them dared his voice to raise,
That will to question:—and they could not praise.
"Beloved brother," thus the monarch cried
To his dear LAKSHMAN, whom he called aside,—
LAKSHMAN, who knew no will save his alone
Whose hero deeds through all the world were known:—

SITA BANISHED.

"My queen has told me that she longs to rove
Beneath the shade of SAINT VÁLMÍKI'S grove:
Now mount thy car, away my lady bear;
Tell all, and leave her in the forest there."
The car was brought. The gentle lady smiled,
As the glad news her trusting heart beguiled.
She mounted up: SUMANTRA held the reins;
And forth the coursers bounded o'er the plains.
She saw green fields in all their beauty drest,
And thanked her husband in her loving breast;
Alas, deluded Queen! she little thought
How sad a change within her Lord was wrought;
How one she worshipped like the heavenly Tree
Could, in a moment's time, so deadly be.
Her right eye throbbed,—ill-omened sign, to tell
The endless loss of him she loved so well,
And to the lady's saddening heart revealed
The woe that LAKSHMAN, in his love, concealed.
Pale grew the bloom of her sweet face,—as fade
The lotus blossoms,—by that sign dismayed.
"Oh, may this omen,"—was her silent prayer,—
"No grief to RÁMA or his brothers bear!"

SITA BANISHED.

When LAKSHMAN, faithful to his brother, stood
Prepared to leave her in the distant wood,
The holy GANGA, flowing by the way,
Raised all her waves, like hands, to bid him stay.
At length, with sobs and burning tears that rolled
Down his sad face, the King's command he told;
As when a monstrous cloud, in evil hour,
Rains from its labouring womb a stony shower.
She heard, she swooned, she fell upon the earth,
Fell on that bosom whence she sprang to birth.
As, when the tempest in its fury flies,
Low in the dust the prostrate creeper lies,
So, struck with terror, sank she on the ground,
And all her gems, like flowers, lay scattered round.
But Earth, her mother, closed her stony breast,
And, filled with doubt, denied her daughter rest.
She would not think the Chief of RAGHU's race
Would thus his own dear guiltless wife disgrace.
Stunned and unconscious, long the lady lay,
And felt no grief, her senses all astray.
But gentle LAKSHMAN, with a brother's care,
Brought back her sense, and, with her sense, despair.

SITA BANISHED.

Oh, happier far that stupor of the brain
Than life and knowledge that are only pain!
But not her wrongs, her shame, her grief, could wring
One angry word against her Lord the King:
Upon herself alone the blame she laid,
For tears and sighs that would not yet be stayed.
To soothe her anguish LAKSHMAN gently strove;
He showed the path to SAINT VÁLMÍKI'S grove;
And craved her pardon for the share of ill
He wrought, obedient to his brother's will.
"O, long and happy, dearest brother, live!
I have to praise," she cried, "and not forgive:
To do his will should be thy noblest praise;
As VISHNU ever INDRA'S will obeys.
Return, dear brother: on each royal dame
Bestow a blessing in poor SITA'S name,
And bid them, in their love, kind pity take
Upon her offspring, for the father's sake.
And speak my message in the monarch's ear,
The last last words of mine that he shall hear:
'Say, was it worthy of thy noble race
Thy guiltless Queen thus lightly to disgrace?

For idle tales to spurn thy faithful bride,
Whose constant truth the searching fire had tried?
Or may I hope thy soul refused assent,
And but thy voice decreed my banishment?
Hope that no care could turn, no love could stay
The lightning stroke that falls on me to-day?
That sins committed in the life that's fled
Have brought this evil on my guilty head?
Thou leftest Fortune, by thy side who stood,
To roam with SITA through the dreary wood;
And the proud Queen has laboured to destroy,
In jealous rage, her happier rival's joy.
Of old, fair women, by the Fiend oppressed,
Sought RÁMA's wife for safety and for rest.
From whom, when thou art living, shall she crave
The aid and pitying love that once she gave?
Think not I value now my widowed life,
Worthless to her who once was RÁMA's wife.
I only live because I hope to see
The dear dear babe that will resemble thee.
And then my task of penance shall be done,
With eyes uplifted to the scorching Sun;

So shall the life that is to come restore
My own dear husband, to be lost no more.
One thought remains my widowed heart to cheer,
Though far from thee, and home, and all that's dear.
Still in her cell the poor recluse will share
RÁMA's protection and his watchful care:
For monarchs ever must defend from ill
The Castes and Orders: such is MANU's will.' "
And LAKSHMAN swore her every word to tell;
Then turned to go, and bade the Queen farewell.
Alone with all her woes, her piteous cries
Rose like a butchered lamb's that struggling dies.
The reverend Sage who from his dwelling came
For sacred grass and wood, to feed the flame,
Heard her loud shrieks that rent the echoing wood,
And, quickly following, by the mourner stood.
Before the Sage the lady bent her low,
Dried her poor eyes, and strove to calm her woe.
With blessings on her hopes, the blameless man
In silver tones his soothing speech began:
"The woes, the wrongs of RÁMA's banished Queen,
With more than mortal ken my soul hath seen.

But let not sorrow fill thy gentle breast;
Thy father's halls again shall give thee rest.
Thy Lord the terror of the Worlds o'erthrew:
He is no boaster; and his word is true.
For this I love him; but for this I blame,
That he has doomed thee to this cruel shame.
Thy husband's sire was once my chosen friend;
Thy father's arms the good from woe defend:
First of all faithful wives, O Queen, art thou;
And can I fail to mourn thy sorrows now?
Rest in this holy grove, nor harbour fear
Where dwell in safety e'en the timid deer.
Here shall thine offspring safely see the light,
And be partaker of each holy rite.
Here, near the Hermits' dwellings, shalt thou lave
Thy limbs in TONSE's sin-destroying wave,
And on her isles, by prayer and worship, gain
Sweet peace of mind, and rest from care and pain.
Each Hermit-maiden, with her sweet soft voice,
Shall soothe thy woe, and bid thy heart rejoice;
With fruit and early flowers thy lap shall fill,
And offer grain that springs for us at will.

And here, with labour light, thy task shall be
To water carefully each tender tree,
And learn how sweet a nursing mother's joy,
Ere on thy bosom rest thy lovely boy."

The Deserted City.

"SEAT of his rule," 't was thus the form replied,
" The fair AYODHYA was thy father's pride:
Reft of her lord, that city lies forlorn;
And I, her Goddess, o'er her glories mourn.
Ah, for my palmy days! My fate was high:
KUVERA'S city was not blest as I.
The realm was happy; and a joyful throng
Made my streets merry with the feast and song.
Sad is the sight, that city once so fair!
A hundred palaces lie ruined there:
Her lofty towers are fallen; and creepers grow
O'er marble dome and shattered portico.
Now, since her heedless lord is far away,
She looks as gloomy as the close of day,

THE DESERTED CITY.

When falls the sun behind the western hill,
And threatening clouds the air with horror fill.
Once, with their tinkling zones and painted feet,
Gay bands of women thronged the royal street:
Now, through the night the hungry jackal prowls,
And seeks his scanty prey with angry howls.
Once there was music in the plashing wave
Of lakes, where maidens loved their limbs to lave;
But now those waters echo with the blows
Struck by the horns of savage buffaloes.
Once the tame peacock showed his glittering crest
'Mid waving branches, where he loved to rest:
The ruthless flame has laid those branches low,
And marred his feathers and their golden glow:
The drum is silent that he loved to hear,
And gone the mistress whom he held so dear.
Once on my marble floor girls loved to place
The painted foot, and leave its charming trace:
Now the fell tigress stains, with dripping gore
Of kids just slaughtered, that neglected floor.
Till now, as painted by the artist's hand,
The pictured elephants at pasture stand:

Each from his partner seems with love to take
The lotus, gathered by the silver lake:
So true to life, that lions, prowling round,
Spring at their foreheads with a furious bound,
And with their claws the painted temples tear,
As if the driver's steel had marked them there.

In those dear days, with tints of nature warm,
In marble statues lived fair woman's form:
Alas! those tints are faded now, and dim,
And gathering dust obscures each rounded limb;
While the cast skins of serpents form a vest
That hides the beauties of each statue's breast.
How sweet the moon-beams used, of old, to fall,
With silvering light, on terrace, roof, and wall!
But now, neglected, there the grass grows wild,
The roofs are shattered, and with dust defiled.

Pure shine those rays, and silvery, as of yore,
But find their light reflected there no more.
Once in my gardens lovely girls, at play,
Culled the bright flowers, and gently touched the spray;
But now wild monkeys, in their savage joy,
Tread down the blossoms, and the plants destroy.

By night no torches in the windows gleam;
By day no women in their beauty beam:
The smoke has ceased; the spider there has spread
His snares in safety:—and all else is dead."

The Ladies' Bath.

"SEE, no more languid with the heat of day,
A hundred fair ones, all mine own, at play
In SARJU'S waves, which, tinted with the dyes
That graced their bosoms, mock the evening skies,
When dark clouds roll along, and, rolling, show,
Upon their skirts, the lines of sunset's glow.
Stirred by their play, the gently rippling wave
Steals from their eyes the dye the pencil gave;
But quick the light of love and joy returns,
And each moist eye with brighter lustre burns.
See, as they revel in their merry sport,
Their bracelets' weight the girls can scarce support,
Well nigh o'erladen with their wealth of charms,—
Their broad full bosom, their voluptuous arms.

THE LADIES' BATH.

Look, how the flower that decked that lady's ear
Slips from her loosened hair, and, floating near
The river's bank, deceives the fish that feeds
On the sweet buds of trailing water-weeds.
To meet the wave, their heads the bathers bend,
And the large drops adown their cheeks descend:
You scarce can tell them from the pearls that deck—
So pure and bright are they—each lady's neck.
Now at one view I see the beauties there,
That poet-lovers in their lays compare:
The curling ripples of the waves, that show
Her eyebrow's arching beauty, as they flow;
The two fond love-birds, on the wave that rest,
And the twin beauties of a lady's breast.
I hear the sound of plashing waves, that comes
Mixed with sweet singing, like the roll of drums.
The peacocks, listening on the shore, rejoice,
Spread their broad tails, and raise the answering voice.
Still the girls' jewelled zones are gleaming bright,
Like stars, when moonbeams shed their pearly light.
But now no more the melody can ring
Upon those waists, to which the garments cling,

Showing their graceful forms: the water fills
The bells that tinkled, and their music stills.
Look! there a band of ladies, bolder grown,
O'er a friend's head a watery stream have thrown;
And the drenched girl, her long black hair untied,
Wrings out the water with the sandal dyed.
Still is their dress most lovely, though their play
Has loosed their locks, and washed the dye away,
And though the pearls, that wont their neck to grace,
Have slipped, disordered, from their resting-place."

Mother and Son.

SOON as the tents were reached, each royal chief
Found his sad widowed mother, bowed by grief;
Like two fond creepers, left to pine alone,
Dead the fair tree round which their arms were thrown.
Then, as, in tender love, each hero prest
His long-lost mother to his throbbing breast,
Scarce could her eyes, with long long weeping dim,
See through her gushing tears, see even him:
But, as he fell upon her neck, she smiled,
And by his touch the mother knew her child.

Reti's Lament.

Sad, solitary, helpless, faint, forlorn,
Woke widowed Reti from her swoon, to mourn.
Scarce could she rise, all trembling, from the ground;
Scarce could she bend her wildered gaze around,
Unconscious yet those loving eyes should never
Feast on his beauty more,—gone, gone for ever.
She clasped the dank earth, in her wild despair,
Beat her dear breast, and rent her long bright hair,
Till hill and valley caught the mourner's cry,
And pitying breezes echoed sigh for sigh:
"Speak to me, Káma! Why so silent? Give
One word in answer. Doth my darling live?
Oh! thou wast beautiful. Fond lovers swear
Their own bright maidens are like Káma fair.
Sure, woman's heart is stony: can it be
That I still live, while this is all of thee?

RETI'S LAMENT.

Where art thou, KÁMA? Could my dearest leave
His own fond RETI here alone to grieve?
So must the sad forsaken Lotus die,
When her bright river leaves his channel dry.
KÁMA, dear KÁMA, call again to mind,
That thou wast gentle, and that I was kind.
Let not my prayer, thy RETI's prayer, be vain:
Come, as of old, and bless these eyes again.
Wilt thou not hear me? Think of those sweet hours,
When I would bind thee with my zone of flowers,—
Those soft gay fetters fondly o'er thee wreathing,
Thine only punishment,—when, gently breathing,
In tones of love thy heedless sigh betrayed
The name, dear traitor, of some rival maid.
Then would I pluck a floweret from my tress,
And beat thee till I forced thee to confess;
While, in my play, the falling leaves would cover
The eyes, the bright eyes, of my captive lover.
And then those words that made me, oh! so blest:
'Dear love, thy home is in my faithful breast.'
Alas! sweet words too blissful to be true;
Or how couldst thou have died, nor RETI perish, too?

RETI'S LAMENT.

Come, bring once more that ecstasy of bliss,
The fond dear look, the smile, and, ah! that kiss.
Fainting with woe, my soul refuses rest,
When memory pictures how I have been blest.
See, thou didst twine a garland, love, to deck,
With choicest blooms of spring, thy RETI's neck:
The leaves are green, the flowers are fresh and gay;
And is my KÂMA yet more frail than they?
Now on the pile my faint limbs will I throw,
And rest with thee: for 't is far better so,
Than if beneath my weary frame were spread
Soft leaves and blossoms for my lonely bed.
Shame, that I linger e'en this little while!
Yet, ere the maids of Heaven have won thy smile,
Or on my love their witching glances thrown,
I will be there, and claim thee for mine own.

The mourning Lotus, in her sorrow, dies,
When fades the Moon, her lover, from the skies:
When sinks the red cloud in the purple west,
Still clings his bride, the lightning, to his breast.
All Nature keeps eternal Love's decree;
And I, mine own dear love, will die with thee.'

The Rains.

WHO is this that driveth near,
Heralded by sounds of fear?
Red his flag, the lightning's glare
Flashing through the murky air:
Pealing thunder for his drums,
Royally the monarch comes.
See, he rides, amid the crowd,
On his elephant of cloud,
Marshalling his kingly train:
Welcome, O thou Lord of Rain!
Gathered clouds as black as night
Hide the face of heaven from sight,
Sailing on their airy road,
Sinking with their watery load,

THE RAINS.

Pouring down a flood of tears;
Pleasant music to our ears.
Woe to him whose love 's away:
He must mourn, while all are gay.
Every cooling drop that flows
Swells the torrent of his woes.
If he raise his tearful eye,
INDRA's Bow, that spans the sky,
Strung with lightning, hurls a dart
Piercing through his lonely heart:
For the clouds, in fancy's dream,
Belted with the lightning's gleam,
Conjure up the flashing zone
Of the maid he calls his own;
And the lines of glory there
Match the gems she loves to wear.
Earth, what dame has gems like thine,
When thy golden fire-flies shine?
When thy buds of emerald green
Deck the bosom of their Queen?
Look upon the woods, and see
Bursting with new life each tree.

THE RAINS.

Look upon the river side,
Where the fawns in lilies hide.
See the peacocks hail the rain,
Spreading wide their jewelled train:
They will revel, dance, and play
In their wildest joy to-day.
What delight our bosom fills,
As we gaze upon the hills,
Where those happy peacocks dance,
And the silver streamlets glance,
And the clouds, enamoured, rest,
Like a crown, upon the crest
Of that hill that fainting lay
'Neath the burning summer ray,
While the freshening streams they shed
Glorify his woody head.
Bees, that round the lily throng,
Soothe us with their drowsy song:
Towards the lotus-bed they fly;
But the peacock, dancing by,
Spreads abroad his train so fair,
That they cling, deluded, there.

THE RAINS.

Oh, that breeze! his breath how cool!
He has fanned the shady pool:
He has danced with bending flowers,
And kissed them in the jasmine bowers:
Every sweetest plant has lent
All the riches of its scent,
And the cloud who loves him flings
Cooling drops upon his wings.

Autumn.

WELCOME, Autumn, lovely bride,
Full of beauty, full of pride!
Hear her anklets' silver ring:
'T is the swans that round her sing.
Mark the glory of her face:
'T is the lotus lends it grace.
See the garb around her thrown;
Look and wonder at her zone.
Robes of maize her limbs enfold,
Girt with rice like shining gold.
Streams are white with silver wings
Of the swans that Autumn brings:
Lakes are sweet with opening flowers,
Gardens, gay with jasmine bowers;

AUTUMN.

While the woods, to charm the sight,
Show their bloom of purest white.
Vainly might the fairest try
With the charms around to vie.
How can INDIA's graceful daughter
Match that Swan upon the water?
Fair her arching brow above
Swimming eyes that melt with love:
But that charming brow can never
Beat that ripple on the river;
And those eyes must still confess
Lilies' rarer loveliness.
Perfect are those rounded arms,
Aided by the bracelets' charms:
Fairer still those branches are,
And those creepers, better far,
Ring them round with many a fold,
Lovelier than gems and gold.
Look upon that beauteous girl,
Coral-lipped, and toothed with pearl:
See the lily and the rose:
Teeth and lips must yield to those.

AUTUMN.

Now no more doth INDRA'S Bow
In the evening sun-light glow,
Nor his flag, the lightning's glare,
Flash across the murky air;
Nor the cranes in armies fly,
Steering through the cloudy sky;
Nor the peacocks lift the head:
Love and joy for them are fled.
Love from them is fled, and they
Care no more to dance and play:
Love has sought the swans, who glide
Sweetly singing down the tide.
Beauty too has left the trees
Which but now were wont to please:
Other darlings claim her care;
And she pours her blossoms there.

Now beneath the moonlight sweet
Many troops of maidens meet:
Many a pleasant tale they tell
Of the youths that love them well;
Of the word, the flush, the glance,
The sigh, the kiss, the dalliance.

Ah! for him whom cruel fate
Keeps afar, disconsolate!
Nature's very loveliness
But embitters his distress.
Hapless youth, each fairest scene
Bids him think on what has been.
Lotus-blossoms cause a sigh,
Like, too like her beaming eye;
And the tear of anguish flows,
As he gazes on the rose,
Pining for remembered bliss,
And the lips he loved to kiss.
Hark! the swan's wild music swells
But, to him, the tinkling bells
Of the zone she used to wear
Ring in mockery through the air.

Not a youth can wander, when
Jasmine blossoms scent the glen,
While the notes of many a bird
From the garden shades are heard,
And the lotus-eyes of deer
Mildly through the covert peer,

But his melting soul must feel
Sweetest longing o'er it steal.
Not a maid can brush away
Morning dew-drops from the spray,
But she feels a sweet unrest
Wooingly disturb her breast,
As the breezes, fresh and cool
From the lilies on the pool,
Sweet with all the fragrance there,
Play, like lovers, with her hair.

Notes.

Page 1.

The Invocation.—This is a translation of the first ten stanzas of the first canto of the *Raghuvanśa*, or *Children of the Sun*, an epic poem by Kálidása. The poem describes the exploits of a line of Princes descended from the Sun, of whom Ráma was the boast and ornament. It has been translated into Latin by Stenzler, and into French by M. Hippolyte Fauche, and roughly thrown into English verse by the present translator, who does not, however, venture to publish it entire.

Close as the links that word and sense ally.—The Mímánsá school of philosophy holds that a word and its meaning are eternally and inseparably connected.

Hear, mighty Siva, gracious Uma, hear.—'Siva is the destroyer and regenerator, in the Indian Trinity. Umá is the daughter of Himálaya, the monarch of mountains. Her birth, beauty, love, penance, and marriage to 'Siva are described in Kálidása's *Kumára-Sambhava*, or *Birth of the War-God*.

Page 2.

Yet by their lays the ancient Sons of Song.—Alluding to Válmíki, author of the *Rámáyaṇa*, and others.

Page 4.

Aja.—The story of Aja, as here translated, is taken from the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth cantos of the *Raghuvanśa*.

The Moon now fading fast away.—It must be remembered that, in India, the moon is a God.

Page 7.

To choose the flower mid chiefs of many a land.—The *Swayamvara*, or choice of a husband of her own rank, was one of the privileges of an Indian princess.

NOTES.

Page 10.

See the brave Lord of Magadh's wide domain.—Magadh is South Behar.

The dames of Pushpapura.—Literally, the city of flowers: Páṭaliputra, or Palibothra, now represented by a village near Patna.

Page 11.

Indra.—The Jupiter of the Hindus.

Page 13.

Vengeful Ráma.—Paraśuráma, the first of the three Rámas, and the sixth Avatar, or descent, of the God Vishṇu.

Lakshmí.—The Goddess of Beauty and Wealth, and wife of Vishṇu.

Page 14.

What cares the Lotus.—The more ordinary species of Lotus closes its flowers at night.

Vrindávan.—The Arcadia of India, near Mathurá.

Kuvera's sway.—Kuvera is the God of Wealth. His gardens are famed for their beauty.

Page 15.

Govardhan.—A celebrated hill near Mathurá.

Mahendra's Monarch.—Mahendra is, apparently, the northern part of the *ghâts* of the peninsula.

Page 16.

Pándus' King.—His country is supposed to be represented by the present Tinnevelly and part of Madura, in the Madras Presidency.

Malaya's Hill.—A mountain, or mountainous range, answering to the western *ghâts* in the Peninsula.

Elás.—Cardamoms (Eletteria Cardamomum).

Tamála.—The name of a tree bearing black blossoms (Xanthocymus pictorius).

NOTES.

Page 17.

Kosal's monarchs.—Kings of what is now Oudh.

Page 18.

Fair as Jayanta.—The son of Indra.

Page 22.

Holy Meru.—The sacred mountain in the centre of the seven continents of Hindu geography.

Page 26.

That noble horseman.—Remembering the law of Manu, which inculcates mercy in battle:

"Spare him if he sink exhausted, spare him if for life he crave."

Page 28.

That magic bow.—Magic weapons figure largely in Indian battle-pieces.

Page 32.

The binding deeds.—All works, being either good or evil, and, therefore, requiring to be rewarded or punished in another life on earth, or in heaven, or hell, hinder the soul's final emancipation from the body, unless they be purged away in the voluntary purgatory here described.

Nature's triple chain.—The three qualities incident to human nature,—Passion, Goodness, and Darkness.

Page 33.

Without the aid of fire.—The corpse of a hermit is not burnt.

Page 34.

The ancient claim.—The duty of being a father, in order that the offerings to the ancestors' *manes* may be duly kept up.

Page 35.

Nárad, sweet singer.—The son of Brahmá, and one of the divine Munis, or Ṛishis. He invented the *viṇá*, or lute.

In far Gokarṇa.—A place of pilgrimage on the Malabar coast.

NOTES.

Page 37.

And Amrit kill.—The nectar of the Indian Gods.

Page 39.

Koïls thy voice of music.—The Koïl (cuculus Indicus) makes a prominent figure in Indian poetry, in which he appears, like our cuckoo, as the harbinger of spring, and, like our nightingale, as the most musical of birds.

Thy dear Asoka tree.—The Jonesia Asoka, one of the loveliest trees of India, and, perhaps, of the whole world. "It is the height of a moderate horse-chestnut, thick in foliage, and literally covered with heads of red flowers resembling the *Ixora*.'—Mrs. Speirs's *Life in Ancient India*.

Page 44.

Sita.—This colloquy between Ráma and Sítá is taken from the *Rámáyaṇa*, Book II. Ráma has been banished by his father, Daśaratha, for fourteen years. The reader is referred to Mrs. Speirs's *Life in Ancient India*, and to Professor Monier Williams's *Indian Epic Poetry*, for an account of this glorious old poem, which the present translator hopes soon to offer to the public in an English dress.

Page 52.

Savitri.—The story of Savitri is taken from the *Mahábhárata*. The translation is a free one, and is considerably condensed. A more literal rendering of the original may be found in *Specimens of Old Indian Poetry*.

Page 65.

Dilipa.—The story of Dilipa is taken from the first, second, and part of the third cantos of the *Raghuvanśa*. The service of the cow will, as Professor H. H. Wilson has observed, "raise a smile upon the face of a European critic; but it is not unpoetical, and is intensely characteristic."

First, like the mystic word in Scripture's page.—The sacred syllable OM, prefacing the prayers and most of the writings of the Hindus.

NOTES.

Page 71.

With the Great Matron, in the hermitage.—The Great Matron is Arundhatí, the wife of Vasishṭha.

Page 72.

As Lokáloka's chain, with one side bright.—A mountainous belt, surrounding the outermost of the seven seas, and bounding the world.

Page 73.

The holy Cow beneath the shadow lay.—Surabhí, the Cow of Plenty, able to grant every wish.

Page 74.

The dreary vow that old Prachetas made.—See the *Mahábhárata*, Vol. I., p. 32 (Calcutta edition).

Page 80.

Who wears at will eight various forms.—These eight forms are earth, water, fire, air, ether, the sun, the moon, and the offerer of the soma-juice.

Page 81.

Now, sweet as to the Gods' tremendous foe.—The fiend Ráhu, who causes eclipses by attempting to swallow the sun and moon.

Page 86.

Strong as the King of Serpents that upholds.—Vásuki.

Page 88.

As Ocean ne'er can check his billows' swell.—At the *Churning of the Ocean*, told in the *Mahábhárata* (see *Specimens of Old Indian Poetry*), the moon, with other buried treasures, was recovered from the sea, and is, therefore, regarded, by him, with parental love.

Page 89.

The sacred cord.—Investiture with the sacred cord, which is the outward sign of regeneration, is a most important ceremony in the life of young Hindus of the first, second, and third classes, who are, hence, called *Twice-born*.

The four-fold lore.—Metaphysics, scripture, useful arts, and polity.

NOTES.

Page 90.

Like Daksha's daughters. — Daksha had sixty daughters, of whom twenty-seven are the nymphs who form the lunar asterisms, and are the wives of the Moon.

Page 95.

THE ADDRESS TO VISHNU.—This piece is taken from the tenth canto of the *Raghuvanśa.*

Page 98.

The holy lore that seeks the four-fold meed.—The four-fold meed is Duty, Wealth, Desire, and Salvation.

Page 100.

How Rávan threatened.—Rávaṇa was a mighty ten-headed fiend, and King of Lanká, or Ceylon. He was killed by Vishṇu, incarnate as Ráma.

Page 102.

THE FLYING CAR.—This extract, from the thirteenth canto of the *Raghuvanśa*, describes the return of Ráma, with Sítá, (whom he has recovered from Rávaṇa, who had carried her off), from Lanká to Ayodhyá.

My causeway parts the Ocean's foamy tide.—The bridge of rocks thrown across from the mainland to Lanká, by Ráma, when he invaded that island, to recover Sítá.

Following fast, when Kapil dared to lead.—When King Sagara was going to perform an *Aśwamedha*, or horse-sacrifice, the sage Kapila drove the intended victim away to the infernal regions, whither Sagara's sons followed, digging their way under the sea.

Page 103.

When Indra's bolt had shorn.—The hills had wings, till Indra cut them off with his thunderbolt.

Page 104.

Like chowries waving round each monster's ear.—A chowrie is a long brush used to whisk off flies.

NOTES.

Page 105.

Sweet with the odours of Airávat's brow.—Airávata is Indra's elephant.

Page 106.

There, in my frantic search.—When Sitá was carried off by Rávaṇa.

By the fierce giant.—Rávaṇa.

Page 107.

Lakshman.—Ráma's brother.

Page 109.

Swarga's lovely train.—Swarga is Indra's Heaven.

Page 112.

Each Yaksha's bride.—The Yakshas are demigods, attending especially on the God Kuvera, and employed in the care of his gardens and treasures. Another of their functions is to serve the chariot of the Sun.

Page 113.

Sita Banished.—This extract is taken from the fourteenth canto of the *Raghuvanśa*.

Page 116.

I leave the daughter of Videha's King.—Sítá was the adopted daughter of Janaka, King of Videhá, or Mithilá.

Page 117.

Saint Válmíki's Grove.—Válmíki is the author of the *Rámáyaṇa*.

Page 118.

But Earth, her mother.—The Earth was, in a special way, the mother of Sítá, who was—

"Not of woman born;
Found in the furrow, as they ploughed the earth."

Rámáyaṇa.

Page 119.

Each royal dame.—The mother and two step-mothers of Ráma.

NOTES.

Page 120.

Whose constant truth the searching fire had tried.—After her return from her imprisonment in Lanká, Sítá passed triumphantly the ordeal of fire.

Page 121.

The reverend sage.—Válmíki.

Page 124.

The Deserted City.—This piece is taken from the sixteenth canto of the *Raghuvanśa.* Kuśa, son of Ráma, has chosen a new capital, and deserted the capital of his ancestors, Ayodhyá, whose guardian Goddess appears and remonstrates.

Page 128.

The Ladies' Bath.—From the sixteenth canto of the *Raghuvanśa.*

Page 131.

Mother and Son.—From the fourteenth canto of the *Raghuvanśa.*

Page 132.

Reti's Lament.—From the fourth canto of Kálidása's *Kumára-Sambhava*, or *Birth of the War-God.* Rati is the wife of Káma, or Love, who has just been killed by 'Siva, for daring to aim at him.

Pages 135 and 139.

The Rains, and Autumn.—Freely translated from the *Ṛitu-sanhára*, or *The Seasons*, a pretty little poem ascribed to Kálidása.

THE END.

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